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# THANK YOU

By WINCHELL SMITH *and* TOM CUSHING



**SAMUEL FRENCH, 25 West 45th St., New York**

## Pollyanna

The glad play, by Catherine Chisholm Cushing, after the novel by Eleanor H. Porter. 5 males, 6 females. 2 interiors. Costumes, modern. Plays  $2\frac{1}{4}$  hours. An orphan girl is thrust into the home of a maiden aunt. In spite of the trials that beset her, she manages to find something to be glad about, and brings light into sunless lives. Finally Pollyanna straightens out the love affairs of her elders, and finds happiness for herself in Jimmy. "Pollyanna" gives a better appreciation of people and the world. It reflects the humor and humanity that gave the story such wonderful popularity among young and old.

Produced in New York, and for two seasons on tour. Royalty, \$25.00. Price, 75 cents.

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An optimistic comedy in 3 acts, by Julie M. Lippmann, author of the "Martha" stories. 5 males, 5 females. 3 interiors. Costumes, modern. Plays  $2\frac{1}{2}$  hours.

Full of quaint humor, old-fashioned, homely sentiment, the kind that people who see the play will recall and chuckle over tomorrow and the next day.

Miss Lippmann has herself adapted her successful book for the stage and has selected from her novel the most telling incidents, infectious comedy and homely sentiment for the play, and the result is thoroughly delightful. Royalty, \$25. Price, 60 cents.

## Seventeen

A comedy of youth, in 4 acts, by Booth Tarkington. 8 males, 6 females. 1 exterior, 2 interiors. Costumes, modern. Plays  $2\frac{1}{2}$  hours.

It is the tragedy of William Sylvanus Baxter that he has ceased to be sixteen and is not yet eighteen. Seventeen is not an age, it is a disease.

In his heart William knows all the tortures and delights of love. But he is still sent by his mother on errands of the most humiliating sort and depends on his father for every nickel, the use of which he must justify before he gets it.

"Silly" Bill fell in love with Lola, the "Baby-Talk Lady," a vapid little flirt. To woo her in a manner worthy of himself (and of her) he steals his father's evening clothes. When his wootings become a nuisance to the neighborhood, his mother steals them back, and has them let out to fit the middle-aged form of her husband, thereby keeping William at home.

But when it comes to the "Baby-Talk Lady's" good-bye dance, not to be present was unendurable. Now William again gets the dress suit, and how he wears it at the party, and Genesis discloses the fact that the proud garment is in reality his father's makes up the story of the play.

"Seventeen" is a work of exquisite human sympathy and delicious humor. Royalty, \$25.00. Price, 75 cents.

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SAMUEL FRENCH, 25 West 45th Street, New York City  
New and Explicit Descriptive Catalogue Mailed  
Free on Request

# THANK YOU

*A PLAY IN THREE ACTS*

BY

WINCHELL SMITH AND TOM CUSHING

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*"Thank You"*



JOHN GOLDEN presents a New Comedy

THANK YOU

By WINCHELL SMITH and TOM CUSHING

As presented at the Longacre Theatre, New York,  
October 3, 1921.

HANNAH .....	<i>Helen Judson</i>
MISS BLODGETT .....	<i>Dickie Woolman</i>
JOE WILLETTS .....	<i>Albert Hyde</i>
THE REV. DAVID LEE .....	<i>Harry Davenport</i>
ANDY BEARDSLEY .....	<i>Frank McCormack</i>
MRS. JONES .....	<i>Alice Johnson</i>
GLADYS JONES .....	<i>Frances Simpson</i>
MONTE JONES .....	<i>Theodore Westman, Jr.</i>
DIANE .....	<i>Edith King</i>
KENNETH JAMIESON .....	<i>Donald Foster</i>
CORNELIUS JAMIESON .....	<i>Frank Munroe</i>
LEONARD HIGGINBOTHAM .....	<i>Charles Goodrich</i>
ABNER NORTON .....	<i>George Schiller</i>
DR. ANDREW COBB .....	<i>William Post</i>
JUDGE HASBROUCK .....	<i>Herbert Saunders</i>
HIRAM SWETT .....	<i>Frederick Malcolm</i>
MORTON JONES .....	<i>Alfred Kappeler</i>
ALFRED WATROUS .....	<i>George Spelvin</i>
GRIGGS .....	<i>Leslie Palmer</i>

ACT I. *The Study at St. Mark's Rectory, Dedham,  
Conn. Mid-Winter.*

ACT II. *Same. Spring.*

ACT III. *Same. Autumn.*

Staged by WINCHELL SMITH

Scenery by Physioc Studios, from designs by Wade  
Douglas.

## EXECUTIVE STAFF FOR JOHN GOLDEN

General Manager ..... Edw. G. Cooke  
General Stage Director ..... P. E. McCoy  
Technical Director ..... Everett Annette

## CHARACTERS IN THE PLAY

HANNAH  
BETSY BLODGETT  
DAVID LEE  
JOE WILLETTS  
ANDY BEARDSLEY  
MRS. MORTON JONES  
GLADYS JONĒS  
MONTE JONES  
DIANE LEE  
KENNETH JAMIESON  
HIRAM SWETT  
ABNER NORTON  
JUDGE HASBROUCK  
LEONARD HIGGINBOTHAM  
MORTON JONES  
DR. ANDREW COBB  
CORNELIUS JAMIESON  
GRIGGS

# THANK YOU

## ACT I

*The scene is laid in the study of St. Mark's Rectory, Dedham, Conn. Mid-winter.*

*It is an attractively proportioned room—English Gothic in style—low ceiling and windows with mullioned panes. Along with the first impression one gets of the good taste and rather scholarly charm of the room, one notices the shabbiness of it all. Not a chair but needs doing over—not a rug that has not been darned. At the back, through a generously-built bay window containing a window-seat, one sees a garden in the grasp of winter. The path leading from the village street up to the rectory front door goes directly by this window, so that everybody coming to call can be distinctly seen. At down right, shut off in a sort of alcove, is a fairly large fireplace. Running out, at right angles from the fireplace, is a seat, fairly comfortable, and above it a book-shelf filled with shabby, much-used books.*

*At upper left is the door leading into the entrance hall. It is quite a wide door and is built cater-corner, so that the front door is seen and a little of the hall. An old black walnut coat and um-*

*brella rack is in evidence; on the other side of the hall is doorway, hung with shabby portiere, through which one gets a glimpse of the parlor.*

*There is another door at upper right. This opens into a small back hall and stairway.*

*At down left is the rector's desk. This is far enough out from the wall to allow for a comfortable chair which faces the room. The desk, really a table, is littered, neatly yet systematically, with letters, pamphlets, old inkwell, etc. Another chair stands on the other side of the desk; this the rector uses for those who come to him for advice.*

*The left wall, back of the rector's desk, and upper left wall, are covered with book-shelves, in which the rector's few poorly-bound books, piles of old magazines, old sermons neatly tied, a tobacco jar and pipes, are distributed.*

*Across the room, facing the fireplace, is a deep, high-backed leather chair.*

*Near the door up right is a small table and chair. There is also a small chair near the door up left.*

*The mantel above fireplace contains a few odd pieces of bric-a-brac, a clock and in one corner a lady's gold cigarette-case. Several old-fashioned photographs and pictures hang on walls.*

*It is about four in the afternoon. A wood fire is blazing in the fireplace.*

*AT RISE: The stage is empty. Suddenly the noise of a furnace being shaken is heard.*

*(From the hallway up L. HANNAH appears. She is the rector's housekeeper, and is a brisk, snappy woman of fifty-five. She wears a faded sweater over an old black dress; soiled white apron. On her arm, in flaming contrast to her general get-up, are two very startling French gowns of the latest mode. When she hears the furnace, she walks swiftly to the register, which is in the middle of the floor. The furnace is shaken again and HANNAH carefully places the dresses on the small table up R.; then returns to the register and calls down.)*

HANNAH. Sexton! Mr. Willetts.

WILLETT'S VOICE. *(The sound is very muffled and comes from below)* Huh?

HANNAH. After you put the coal in, leave the dampers full on.

WILLETT'S VOICE. *(Louder)* Huh? What's that?

HANNAH. The rector wants more heat.

WILLETT'S VOICE. Can't hear ye!

HANNAH. *(Gets down on her hands and knees and puts her face close to the register)* Stick yer head in the furnace and you can.

WILLETT'S VOICE. What you talkin' about?

HANNAH. Oh, well, come up here where I can tell you.

WILLETT'S VOICE. Come up there?

HANNAH. Yes.

WILLETT'S VOICE. Well, why didn't you say so? *(The doorbell jangles. HANNAH impatiently turns and goes to front door and opens it, shivering.)*

HANNAH. Come in quick, Betsy.

*(MISS BETSY BLODGETT enters and HANNAH quickly closes front door. MISS BLODGETT enters up L. and crosses immediately to register. HAN-*

NAH follows her into the room and closes door up L. MISS BLODGETT is a typical New England old maid; dressed neatly and warmly, her clothes being a trifle old-fashioned in cut; she is thoroughly satisfied with her principles and method of living and unconsciously supercritical of everyone else. In her own mind, MISS BLODGETT still considers herself a girl; she thinks she is very charitable and thoroughly Christian. As a matter of fact, she is neither, since she is the leading gossip in the village.)

MISS BLODGETT. (*Warming hand over register*) It's real nippy out.

HANNAH. Yes, we're having a mighty cold spell.

MISS BLODGETT. (*Going right to fireplace, removing gloves and dropping them in easy chair*) It's lovely and warm in here. I believe it's the first time I ever saw this fire going.

HANNAH. There's a lot o' things goin' in the rectory that never went before, Betsy!

MISS BLODGETT. (*Turning quickly to HANNAH*) You mean since she came?

HANNAH. Of course I do. (*MISS BLODGETT catches sight of the dresses and goes to the table U.R.*)

MISS BLODGETT. My stars, Hannah! Are those hers?

HANNAH. (*Going to table from c., where she had followed MISS BLODGETT.*) Yes, I've been pressin' 'em out from where they was lyin' in the trunk. (*She picks one up and hands it to MISS BLODGETT.*)

MISS BLODGETT. (*Fingering the gown*) My goodness, Hannah!

(HANNAH watches her as much as to say, "I guess you never saw anything like that before." MISS BLODGETT is quite scandalized at it; goes to table U.R. and examines the other one.)

HANNAH. And she's got another trunkful that's more so! (MISS BLODGETT *looks astounded.*)

MISS BLODGETT. I thought her father didn't leave her a cent!

HANNAH. He didn't. He must have put all the money he made right on her back. And see here— (She goes to mantel, picks up cigarette case. MISS BLODGETT comes down R.) This is her'n, too. (She turns to MISS BLODGETT and shows it to her.)

MISS BLODGETT. (Glancing casually at it and thinking HANNAH isn't up on such things) They call that a vanity case, Hannah. (She turns smilingly and goes back U.R. to table and looks at the clothes.)

HANNAH. (Following her U.R.) No, they don't. (Opening it.) They call it a cigarette case.

MISS BLODGETT. (Stepping back aghast) And she's the rector's niece! Has he seen it?

HANNAH. Seen it! She smokes 'em right in front of his face.

MISS BLODGETT. What does he say?

HANNAH. Nothin'! Since she come the rectory's a different place, and the rector's a different man! (She crosses back to fireplace and replaces case on the mantel.)

MISS BLODGETT. (Coming down R.C.) How do you mean?

HANNAH. (Crossing R.C. to MISS BLODGETT) I mean extravagance, Betsy! Downright extravagance!

MISS BLODGETT. (In an awed tone) What kind of extravagance?

HANNAH. (With some hesitation) Well—tea in the afternoon—with toast and jam and cakes! And cocoa! Cocoa in her bedroom every morning before she's up!

MISS BLODGETT. (Going U.R. to replace dress

*which she is carrying on her arm)* Land's sakes alive!

HANNAH. (*Crossing center*) And the rector has it, too!

MISS BLODGETT. (*Turning quickly*) The rector!

HANNAH. I never thought I'd see such a sight as I seen when I brought the cocoa into her room the first morning. Her a-lyin' there with a nightgown on that looked like window glass!

MISS BLODGETT. Well, I never!

HANNAH. She says, "Take this cup of cocoa to my uncle, please." "Your uncle ain't used to no cocoa in his bed," says I. "And another thing," I says, "I ain't used to goin' in his bedroom before he's up." "Then I'll do it," she says,—with that she hops out o' bed and puts somethin' around her that was so thin I don't know how it held together, grabbed up the tray and off she went into his room with it. And then I heard them laughin' and chattin' for half an hour! (*She crosses to table, picks up dresses carefully.*)

MISS BLODGETT. What did they say?

HANNAH. I ain't in the habit of listenin' to private conversations—and besides they was talkin' in French! (*She turns, goes U.R., as if to door.*)

MISS BLODGETT. In French!

HANNAH. (*Stops; turns*) It must have been French—her bein' born in France and livin' there all her life!

MISS BLODGETT. (*Sits in chair U.R. by table; opens bag, lays it on table and begins taking out a number of articles, putting them on the table one by one, HANNAH watching interestedly.*) Oh, well, I suppose now that she hasn't any folks of her own, it was the poor rector's plain duty to take her in, but it does seem too bad! I know everybody feels sorry for him.

HANNAH. Well, they wouldn't feel sorry for him



if they could only see him. Why, he acts as if he'd lost the last bit of common sense he ever had! (*She crosses to door U.R.*)

(MISS BLODGETT *has taken out something wrapped in tissue paper which she is holding between her teeth, replacing other articles in the bag.*)

MISS BLODGETT. Oh, just a minute, Hannah! (*HANNAH comes back into room; MISS BLODGETT unwraps the tissue paper.*) You take this card to her and tell her I've come to call. (*HANNAH places dresses on window seat U.C. and takes the card.*) Do you think I'd better do it in here or in the parlor?

HANNAH. You can't do it at all now, because she's over at the Sunday School room. The Guild is givin' her a reception this afternoon.

MISS BLODGETT. The Guild is! Why wasn't I told about it?

HANNAH. I s'posed you was.

MISS BLODGETT. Well, I wasn't. (*She goes to easy chair D.R. and picks up gloves.*) I think I've been slighted, and I'm goin' right over to that reception and find out whether I have or not! (*She starts for door U.L. in great indignation.*)

HANNAH. It's most over by this time.

MISS BLODGETT. I'm going anyhow. (*She walks quickly, pulling on gloves. Halfway to door she stops and comes back to HANNAH.*) Oh, I forgot my card! (*HANNAH returns it to her.*)

(*Door U.L. is opened by JOE WILLETTS and he enters. MISS BLODGETT walks quickly by him. JOE WILLETTS is a tall, lanky, raw-boned man, with a drawl. He wears a very old suit, worn and dirty with constant work. His face is smooched with soot and ashes.*)

WILLETTS. Hello, Betsy.

MISS BLODGETT. (*As she hurries out door U.L.*)  
Good afternoon, Sexton.

WILLETTS. (*Calling after her, as she opens front door and exits*) What's your hurry?

(MISS BLODGETT *slams the door shut and is seen scurrying past the window U.C.*)

WILLETTS. (*Turns to HANNAH*) What's the matter with her?

HANNAH. She wants to find out if she's been insulted.

WILLETTS. Don't she know?

HANNAH. No. (*She crosses him and is about to pick up dresses U.C.*)

WILLETTS. What was you yellin' to me about down the register?

HANNAH. (*Turning back to him*) I was tryin' to tell you that the rector wants more heat.

WILLETTS. More heat! And you've got a wood fire goin' in here! What in the world's the matter? Is he sick?

HANNAH. No. Just crazy. (*She goes up to window seat and picks up dresses.*)

WILLETTS. Does he know what coal costs?

HANNAH. He don't care what nothin' costs!

WILLETTS. (*Glancing out of window*) Great Gosh, what's the rector a-doin' now? (*HANNAH puts down dresses once more, and peers out of the window.*)

(*The Rector, DAVID LEE, is seen crossing above windows, arm-in-arm with ANDY BEARDSLEY; ANDY is walking very unsteadily.*)

HANNAH. How should I know? (*She starts quickly for door U.L., WILLETTS watching them out*)

*of sight. She reaches front door just as the RECTOR opens it and leads in ANDY. He has left arm in ANDY'S right, and in his right hand he carries a paper package which he puts on the small table U.R. as he passes it.)*

*(The RECTOR is a man of rare charm, a bachelor of fifty. Absent-minded, and a bit whimsical, he is yet a person of compelling force. He is a born orator, yet is too thoroughly a man to ever get theatrical or self-conscious. His whole thought is focussed outside himself, so that there is nothing introspective or moody in his nature. So keen is his interest in the men and women about him that his personality is extremely youthful—an almost boyish manner that, coupled with his quiet dignity, makes him exceedingly appealing. Above all, one is conscious that he is human. That is as strong a note in him as is the quality of spirituality. His clothes are very worn, the elbows and knees quite shiny. His voice is low and strong; and whenever he hits on a congenial theme his face lights up with enthusiasm. He wears a very inadequate overcoat, the color of which is a little yellow from use.*

*(ANDY is a town character; a stout, good-natured, shaggy-haired man, who has practically lived on the charity of the town for years. He is generally drunk, and even when sober his breath is so strongly reminiscent of past lapses from grace that no one is ever sure about his condition. When sober, he is a man-of-all-work. His clothes are peculiar, having been assembled from every family in Dedham.*

*(The RECTOR takes him into the study, crosses with him D.R. and with a sigh deposits him in the large armchair near the fireplace. ANDY protesting that he doesn't need any assistance.*

(HANNAH closes the front door as soon as they are inside, comes back into the study, and she and WILLETTS, side by side, stand watching the RECTOR curiously.)

RECTOR. (*Going behind the easy chair*) Now, let me push you nearer the fire.

ANDY. (*Hardly able to articulate*) I'm all right.

RECTOR. (*Pushing the chair with considerable effort*) No, you're not all right, Andy. (*He crosses to fireplace, taking off cap, muffler, gloves, etc.*)

ANDY. (*With an attempt to appear sober*) Ain't I? Why ain't I?

RECTOR. Because you're drunk.

ANDY. No, I ain't, David.

RECTOR. Yes, you are. You've broken your promise again. (*ANDY suddenly gives vent to a sob.*)

ANDY. That's right, Davie! I've broken my promise.

RECTOR. Oh, Andy! (*He crosses to table U.R., takes parcel and hands it to HANNAH. Takes off overcoat and lays it on table.*) Take good care of these cakes, Hannah. The baker made them especially for my niece.

ANDY. (*Sobbing*) I broke my promise to him. (*RECTOR crosses to him and warms ANDY's hands, arms, ears, etc.*)

RECTOR. And, Hannah, will you make a cup of coffee for poor Andy?

HANNAH. (*Scandalized*) Now?

RECTOR. Yes, please. (*HANNAH stands a moment angrily watching the Rector, then grabs the Rector's coat and hat and crosses, U.L.*)

ANDY. I ain't worth goin' to no trouble for. (*HANNAH exits U.L.*)

RECTOR. (*To WILLETTS*) I found him asleep behind the wagon-shed. I thought he was frozen.

ANDY. I wish I was.

WILLETTS. Huh! You can't freeze 'em when they're like that! *(Takes a step toward Rector.)* Hannah's been tellin' me you want more heat.

RECTOR. *(Going center to register and feeling heat)* Yes. I want the house kept warmer now that my niece is here.

ANDY. *(Rising with difficulty)* I'll see to the furnace for yer. *(He sways a moment. Rector rushes D.R. and catches him, puts him back in chair. WILLETTS also runs D.R. to him.)*

RECTOR. You stay where you are, Andy.

WILLETTS. *(After a moment's pause)* That old furnace uses up a pile o' coal as it is.

RECTOR. Just the same, we must have it warmer in here.

WILLETTS. All right, sir. *(He puts his hand on ANDY'S arm.)* Can I help you with him?

RECTOR. Not just now, Joe. He's going to have some coffee first.

WILLETTS. If you leave him near that hot fire he'll be dead to the world.

ANDY. You shut your mouth up! *(He doubles up his fists in a weak attempt to hit WILLETTS.)*

RECTOR. Andy! Andy!

WILLETTS. *(Going U.L. to door)* I'll open the dampers and throw on more coal before supper. Sing out when you want me.

RECTOR. All right, Joe, I will. *(WILLETTS exits U.L., closing door. Rector starts left, feels heat coming up through register.)*

ANDY. Davie! *(RECTOR turns to him, but doesn't answer. ANDY calls again, this time a little louder and more plaintively.)* Davie!

RECTOR. *(Going to him)* Yes, Andy. *(ANDY twists around in the chair, and with some effort manages to seize the Rector's hands, which he takes in both of his and squeezes violently.)*

ANDY. You're the best friend I've got in the world, David!

RECTOR. (*Trying unsuccessfully to free his hand*) Then why do you break your promises to me?

ANDY. Because I'm no good—can't resist temptation. You're the best friend I've got in the world. (*RECTOR manages to get his hand away and ANDY sinks back into the chair.*)

RECTOR. Don't try to talk any more, because you don't know what you're saying.

(HANNAH enters U.L. with large cup of coffee.)

ANDY. Oh, yes, I do.

HANNAH. (*Severely*) Here!

ANDY. (*Looking front and groping in the air*) Where?

HANNAH. (*Putting the cup in his hands*) There!

ANDY. (*Patting her hand*) Dear old Hannah!

HANNAH. (*Disgustedly*) Oh! (*She turns and crosses swiftly to door U.L. ANDY, with trembling hands, pours coffee into the saucer, blows in it, then drinks; he repeats this operation until the cup is empty. As HANNAH reaches the door U.L. the RECTOR stops her.*)

RECTOR. (*Going to her U.L.*) Hannah! (*HANNAH stops and turns to him.*) Andy is in need of sleep.

HANNAH. You don't mean——

RECTOR. Is the bed made in the attic room?

HANNAH. I suppose I can get it ready.

RECTOR. Thank you, Hannah. (*He turns from her and goes back to ANDY.*)

HANNAH. Anything else?

RECTOR. That's all, Hannah. (*She flounces out U.L. and closes door sharply. RECTOR comes down on ANDY'S R., watches him for a moment, as he con-*

*sumes the coffee.*) Andy, I want you to tell me where you got the liquor you've been drinking.

ANDY. (*After a little hesitation*) I made it!

RECTOR. Made it!

ANDY. (*Earnestly*) But I had no idea of drinkin' it. I swear I hadn't.

RECTOR. Then why did you make it?

ANDY. (*Confidentially*) Because I could make it for forty cents a quart and knew where I could get eight dollars for it.

RECTOR. (*Disgustedly*) Oh, Andy!

ANDY. Then—then I got to testin' the flavor of it, and that set me a-goin'—and before I knew it, I was gone!

RECTOR. Where's the rest of the liquor?

ANDY. The rest of it?

RECTOR. Yes. What you've made.

ANDY. It's all in me.

RECTOR. You drank all of it?

ANDY. I don't think I overlooked none. I'd only just started makin' it.

(MRS. MORTON JONES *crosses windows quickly.*)

RECTOR. Well, I want you to give me the still, or whatever it is you use. (*Door bell rings.*) Hannah's up in the attic. (*He crosses quickly to door U.L., opens it and goes to front door.*)

ANDY. I borrowed the still from a friend of mine. (*He hears the door open and subsides, puts coffee cup and saucer on floor beneath the chair and stretches his feet toward the fireplace.*)

(MRS. MORTON JONES *enters. She is a humorless person who takes much satisfaction in being the great lady of Dedham. By virtue of her husband's position as the owner of the Jones Cotton Mills, she feels herself the arbiter of all so-*

*cial and charitable activities. She has a distinctly grand manner. She's dressed in fur coat, warm hat, heavy gloves, etc.)*

MRS. JONES. Good afternoon, Rector.

RECTOR. (*Closing outside door*) Why, how do you do, Mrs. Jones. (MRS JONES *walks into center of study. RECTOR hastily comes into study.*) Wouldn't you rather come into the parlor?

MRS. JONES. Oh, no. I just came to see you about Sophia Jamieson's funeral.

RECTOR. (*Closing door U.L.*) We can't go any further with the funeral arrangements until we hear from her brother.

MRS. JONES. But I have heard from him. Mr. Jamieson's in Santa Barbara, California. You see, I sent him a personal telegram in which I offered to take charge of the funeral arrangements.

RECTOR. I see.

MRS. JONES. And he's just called me up on the long distance telephone.

RECTOR. (*Offering MRS. JONES the chair R. of desk*) From California?

MRS. JONES. (*Sitting*) Yes. I could hear as plainly as I can hear you now.

RECTOR. (*Crossing left of desk and sitting*) What did he say?

MRS. JONES. Well, his secretary did the talking. He said Mr. Jamieson was so grateful for my offer, but that he had communicated with his son Kenneth, who would come on from New York to represent the family.

RECTOR. Has his son arrived?

MRS. JONES. No, not yet. But I'm expecting him on the four-ten. Of course, I'll meet him at the train and have him come right to us. (GLADYS JONES *crosses R. to L.*)

RECTOR. This is very good of you, Mrs. Jones.



MRS. JONES. Oh, I'm only too glad to do anything I can. (*ANDY stretches in the easy chair, mumbles to himself and suddenly yells louder in his sleep. Door bell rings. MRS. JONES jumps to her feet and looks around the room.*) Good heavens, what was that?

RECTOR. (*Crossing quickly R. to ANDY*) Andy Beardsley!

MRS. JONES. Andy Beardsley! Where?

RECTOR. He must have fallen asleep. (*He shakes him vigorously.*) Andy! Andy! Wake up!

ANDY. (*Arousing suddenly*) What the hell . . ?

RECTOR. Andy, be quiet! (*Door U.D. opens and HANNAH ushers in GLADYS JONES.*)

(*GLADYS JONES is a nice little flapper, continually shocking her mother with her off-hand ways; she dresses with elaborate thought.*)

HANNAH. (*With surprise on discovering MRS. JONES*) Why, your mother is in here, after all.

GLADYS. I told you so! (*She comes in quickly; goes D.L. to MRS. JONES, who motions to ANDY and RECTOR. GLADYS goes U.R., watching them amusedly.*)

HANNAH. (*To the RECTOR*) The room's ready for him.

RECTOR. Thank you, Hannah.

HANNAH. And the sexton's out there waitin' to help him up to it.

RECTOR. Ask him to come in, Hannah.

HANNAH. (*Calling off*) In here, Mr. Willetts.

RECTOR. Come, Andy. (*WILLETTS enters and comes D.R.; helps RECTOR to lift ANDY from the chair.*)

ANDY. Wha'cha goin' to do with me?

RECTOR. Put you where you can have a rest.

ANDY. Put me anywhere you like, Davie. You're

the best friend I got in all the world. (RECTOR and WILLETTS start U.L. with ANDY between them. GLADYS and MRS. JONES look on; GLADYS amused, MRS. JONES horrified. ANDY looks dazedly at MRS. JONES and GLADYS and endeavors to talk to them as he is led across the room.) I was helpless and he took me in; I was in a pitiful condition and he ministered unto me. All that I am I owe to Davie Lee. (He keeps on talking and murmuring as they drag him through the door.) He's a man among men! That's what Davie Lee is. . . . (HANNAH has crossed R. above easy chair during this scene, hunted for the cup and saucer, crossed U.L. directly behind the trio. Now, with a look at GLADYS and MRS. JONES, she follows them off and closes door.)

GLADYS. (Coming D.C.) What's been going on, mater?

MRS. JONES. Why, I've been sitting here for ten minutes and had no idea the creature was in the room! I've never been so startled!

GLADYS. That's rich! How did he get in here?

MRS. JONES. The Rector must have brought him in.

GLADYS. (Laughingly) I knew they were great pals.

MRS. JONES. To have a good-for-nothing like Andy Beardsley sprawled out in a drunken stupor in the study—— Well, it's inexcusable! (The door U.L. opens and RECTOR enters. He crosses to GLADYS and shakes hands.) How do you do, Gladys. I'm very glad to see you.

GLADYS. I've just come from the Guild. Everyone thinks your niece is awfully attractive.

RECTOR. (Enthusiastically) Yes, isn't she?

MRS. JONES. Is the reception over?

GLADYS. (Turning to her mother) They're beginning to leave. I hurried over here to see you.

MRS. JONES. How did you know I was here?

GLADYS. Monte told me. And he told me about the long distance call from the great millionaire, and that Mr. Kenneth Jamieson will be here on the fourteen, so I'm going to the station with you to meet him. (*Turning right to the RECTOR.*) If we are to entertain royalty, I want to be in on it.

MRS. JONES. Gladys! But where did you see Monte? Surely he wasn't at the Guild!

GLADYS. Wasn't he, though! He's waiting at the Sunday School door now.

MRS. JONES. Waiting? For what?

GLADYS. (*To RECTOR*) To take your niece home! (*To MRS. JONES*) He certainly has it bad! I've never seen him dressed so carefully before. You'd hardly recognize your only son, mater. (*She turns U.C. to window seat, taking off gloves and unbuttoning coat.*)

MRS. JONES. I think Monte'd better come to the station with us. (*GLADYS suddenly catches sight of the dresses on the window seat, hastily leaves muff and gloves on chair U.L. and lifts dresses.*)

GLADYS. Oh, do look at these! (*She comes D.C. between MRS. JONES and the RECTOR, the dresses displayed over one arm.*)

RECTOR. (*Quite seriously to GLADYS*) Why should they be in here?

GLADYS. (*Laughingly*) I can't imagine. They ought to be in a glass case. Look, mater!

(*MONTE JONES and DIANE LEE are seen crossing the front windows.*)

RECTOR. They are lovely, aren't they, Gladys?

GLADYS. Fascinating!

MRS. JONES. Almost startling.

(*RECTOR fingers one gingerly, GLADYS is spreading out the other and MRS. JONES is looking on in*

*disapproval as the door opens U.L. and MONTE enters. DIANE, in hallway, takes off rubbers and gives them to HANNAH. MONTE JONES is a boy of nineteen, good-looking in a rather pleasant way; a little awkward. He would like to be a man of the world.)*

MONTE. Well, here's the family!

RECTOR. Oh, come in, dear. I want you to meet Mrs. Jones.

*(DIANE appears in doorway. She is an altogether charming girl of twenty. Although she is half French, she speaks with only the merest accent. She is decidedly a person of character. Her manner is quiet, and very unaffected. She is thoroughly cosmopolitan and is quite at home in any situation. She has the French instinct for clothes, which are the very latest from Paris. As she comes into the room, vivid, intense and very much alive, she makes the others seem commonplace and colorless, all but the Rector. He is so thoroughly himself and so natural that he acts as a sort of complementary color for her. She has on a smart hat, cocked at just the right angle, and her dress, wrap and furs are striking.)*

DIANE. *(Coming D.L. to MRS. JONES)* Mrs. Jones.

MRS. JONES. *(Taking DIANE's hand)* How do you do, Miss Lee. *(RECTOR has gone to MONTE, shaken hands with him; quickly helps him off with his overcoat and lays it on the window seat. DIANE turns to GLADYS, who is holding the dresses.)*

GLADYS. We've just been feasting our eyes on your dresses.

MONTE. *(Coming down on their R.)* Of all the

nerve! (*To DIANE*) I hope you'll forgive my sister, Miss Lee. She doesn't know any better.

GLADYS. (*To MONTE*) Why, they were lying right here in the study. (*To DIANE*) You don't mind, do you, Miss Lee?

DIANE. (*Smilingly*) On the contrary, I'm flattered. (*MONTE very carefully and awkwardly assists DIANE to take off her wrap.*)

DIANE. (*To MONTE*) Thank you so much.

(*HANNAH enters U.L., bringing in two dining-room chairs. The RECTOR takes the two gowns from GLADYS and goes to HANNAH as she sets the chairs down U.C. MONTE takes DIANE'S wrap out U.L. to hall.*)

RECTOR. Did you leave these here, Hannah?

HANNAH. Oh, I forgot them! (*She takes the gowns from the RECTOR.*) You'll excuse me, Miss Lee, but I'd been ironin' 'em out and was on my way upstairs to your room with 'em. (*She crosses to door U.R. and exits.*)

DIANE. Won't you sit down, Mrs. Jones?

MRS. JONES. I'm afraid we haven't time, thanks.

DIANE. Oh, I'm sorry. I was hoping you'd stop for tea.

MRS. JONES. Tea?

RECTOR. Yes, Mrs. Jones, tea! We have it every afternoon now. (*MONTE re-enters U.L., coming D.L. to DIANE.*)

MRS. JONES. (*Going center to RECTOR*) Really! I should think it would be rather trying to Miss Lee after the refreshments at the Guild!

MONTE. I think she'd need it—to take away the taste of that muck! (*DIANE smiles.*)

MRS. JONES. Monte! (*To RECTOR*) And you know we're going to the station for Mr. Jamieson. He'll have tea with us.

MONTE. (*Looking at his watch*) Well, if you're going to meet the four-ten, Mother, you and Gladys had better get started.

MRS. JONES. (*To MONTE*) I want you to come to the station, too.

MONTE. But, Mother, there's no need of the whole family going.

MRS. JONES. Put on your coat, dear. (*MONTE goes U.C. to window seat and puts on coat.*)

(*HANNAH enters U.L., bringing on two more dining-room chairs.*)

RECTOR. Never mind, Hannah. Our guests are just leaving.

HANNAH. (*Looking at him in surprise*) I'm bringin' these in for the vestry meetin'.

RECTOR. Bless me, I'd forgotten all about it! What time is it, Hannah?

HANNAH. Almost four. (*HANNAH exits U.L., leaving door open.*)

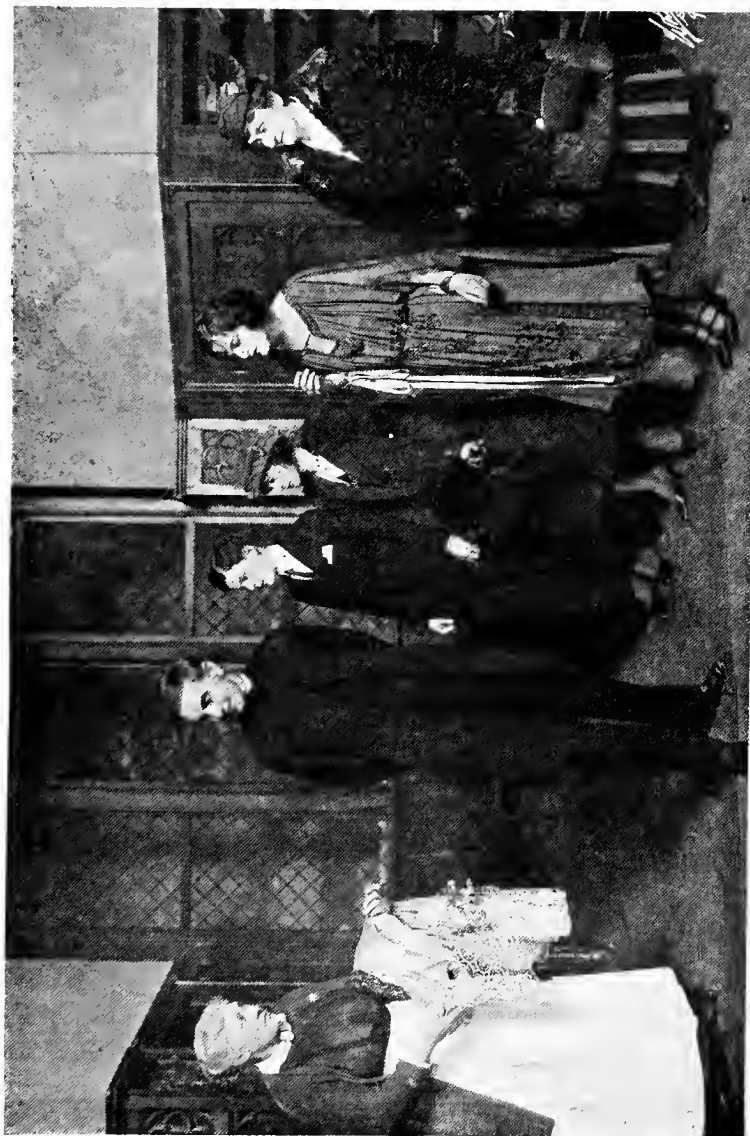
MRS. JONES. Is it? Come, children! (*She turns U.L. to door, then turns back to DIANE, DIANE following her U.C.*) So glad to have met you at last, Miss Lee. I hope the rector will bring you up to Idlewilde some time soon. (*RECTOR goes out door U.L. to hall.*)

DIANE. Thank you, Mrs. Jones. (*MRS. JONES follows RECTOR to hall and bids him good-bye in pantomime.*)

GLADYS. (*Coming D.C. to DIANE*) Good-bye, Miss Lee. Everyone at the Guild was just crazy about you.

MONTE. (*Coming D.C. and speaking quickly*) Oh, they will be in time. Only they don't know what to make of you yet.

(*GLADYS looks at them a moment, then joins the*



"THANK YOU"





RECTOR and her mother in hallway. MONTE lowers his voice and offers his hand.)

MONTE. I'd like to come and call on you, if I may.

MRS. JONES. (*Appearing in doorway U.L.*) Monte! (*DIANE turns U.C. above MONTE; he crosses to door U.L.*)

MONTE. Oh, all right. (*MRS. JONES waits in doorway until MONTE starts; then exits quickly. MONTE exits U.L., following his mother and GLADYS out. RECTOR opens the outside door and the Joneses go out. He closes it quickly and comes into the room.*)

(*DIANE has slowly removed her hat and placed it on the small table U.R. Stands thinking a moment.*)

RECTOR. (*As he closes door U.L.*) Well, there's one member of the Jones family who's ready to become your slave. (*DIANE looks at him and smiles.*) And I don't wonder.

DIANE. Does the vestry meet here in the study?

RECTOR. (*Feeling something unusual in her manner*) Yes. And I forgot all about it. Having you here, Diane, seems to put everything else out of my head!

DIANE. I'm afraid it has—but it mustn't any more.

RECTOR. Why, what do you mean, dear?

DIANE. I mean from now on we're going to think of you and your work. How many are there in the vestry? (*She crosses L. to desk.*)

RECTOR. Seven, if you don't count me. (*DIANE stops center; turns to him.*)

DIANE. But I do count you. . . . Do you sit at your desk for the meeting?

RECTOR. Yes. Why?

DIANE. (*Indicating R. of desk*) And they all sit here?

RECTOR. Yes. (*DIANE places the chair R. of desk at the upper end of the table.*) Here, I can do that!

DIANE. So can I. (*She places the two dining-room chairs which HANNAH has left U.L. in a row below the desk chair.*)

RECTOR. Is anything the matter, Diane?

(*There is a slight pause, the Rector waiting for her to speak. She smiles at him and goes U.R. for the fourth chair, bringing it down and placing it behind first chair of the row, thus starting another row facing the desk.*)

RECTOR. Diane, you are troubled about something.

DIANE. Yes. (*She goes U.L. and brings down small chair, placing it below the first chair in the second row.*) I am!

RECTOR. What is it? Did anything go wrong at the Guild reception?

DIANE. Yes.

RECTOR. What?

DIANE. I did.

RECTOR. You did! What on earth do you mean?

DIANE. (*Stopping with her hands on back of chair*) I mean I wanted the church people to like me, but they don't—they hate me—they just hate me! (*She suddenly leans over the back of the chair and sobs.*)

RECTOR. (*Going quickly behind her and putting his arms around her*) Why, my dear child, what is it? Tell me what it is.

DIANE. (*Talking miserably through her sobs*) It's this dress—and me—and all my clothes. (*She turns quickly and puts her head on his shoulder.*)

RECTOR. (*Patting her comfortingly*) Diane, my dear! What has happened?

DIANE. (*Brushing the tears away and speaking earnestly*) They all thought I was showing off—putting on airs—and the more I tried not to, the worse it looked!

RECTOR. (*Relieved*) Why, my dear little girl, that's nonsense! You just imagined it.

DIANE. No, I didn't. Because on the way home I got it out of the Jones boy what people were saying. They say I'm sure to make trouble for you and that I'm extravagant and you can't afford to have me.

RECTOR. The little fool—to tell you such things.

DIANE. Oh, no, he was very nice. He says it's not my fault, but it's just because I'm your niece, and if I were the relation of a rich man they'd be delighted with me. (*She glances at the five chairs that she has arranged.*) You said seven, didn't you? (*She turns, and goes R. for two more chairs.*)

(RECTOR goes U.R. a little, turns and watches DIANE as she brings them L., one in each hand. Places one downstage in the second row, the other upstage as the first of a third row.)

RECTOR. (*Looking at her in helpless distress*) Diane, I can't tell you how this makes me feel.

DIANE. (*Placing the chairs*) I'm sorry, Uncle, but I had to speak of it, because I can't stay here.

RECTOR. Not stay here?

DIANE. (*Turning to him*) No. I'm going to New York or Boston and find some work.

RECTOR. You don't mean that.

DIANE. Oh, yes, I do. It was wonderful of you to let me come, but I couldn't stay now that I know.

RECTOR. But, my dear, you don't know.

DIANE. Oh, Uncle, please let's be honest about it.

The Jones boy spoke of your salary—he thought I knew what it was. Eight hundred dollars! Of course you can't afford to have me. How you can manage to live yourself is more than I can understand.

RECTOR. But, my dear, my salary is only a part of what I get. I get this house and six tons of coal a year—and donations!

DIANE. Donations?

RECTOR. Bless you, yes. My people are always sending me things. You've no idea how good they are to me.

DIANE. Sending you things? What things?

RECTOR. Everything! Vegetables from their gardens, baked beans, pies and cakes, even chickens and turkeys!

DIANE. They don't pay you enough to live on and then think they make it up by sending you in something to eat! Why, Uncle, I think that's perfectly dreadful!

RECTOR. Dreadful?

DIANE. Yes. They force you to live on tips—like a waiter.

RECTOR. Well, waiters are good fellows.

DIANE. Well, you shall not have me to add to your worries.

RECTOR. To my worries! Diane, I wonder if you have any idea what your coming has meant to me—the difference it's made, after living alone all these years, to have some one with me who belongs to me. Why, I've been happier since you came than I've ever been before in all my life. And I'd rather have the whole parish turn against me, throw me out of my church, tar and feather me and ride me out of town on a rail, than to lose you!

DIANE. Uncle! Do you mean that? Do you really and honestly mean it?

RECTOR. You'd better believe I mean it!

DIANE. Then I'll never say anything more about leaving you.

RECTOR. (*Smiles at her; then seriously*) Because you're sorry for me—and don't want to break my heart?

DIANE. Because you're my father's brother—and I love you! (RECTOR *puts his arm gently around her; hers go impulsively around him.*)

(LEONARD HIGGINBOTHAM, HIRAM SWETT and ABNER NORTON *are seen passing the window. A moment later the door bell rings.*)

DIANE. There's your vestry. (*She starts U.R., but the RECTOR holds her hand.*)

RECTOR. (*Whispering playfully*) I'll tell you a secret. I expect great things at this meeting!

DIANE. (*Whispering*) What?

RECTOR. More salary—a raise!

DIANE. Really!

RECTOR. Yes. I spoke about it at the last meeting, when I heard you were coming.

DIANE. Poor Uncle.

RECTOR. Don't you want to stay and see them?

DIANE. Not unless you want me to.

RECTOR. Then run along. (DIANE *goes to doorway U.R.; gets hat and gloves from table U.R.*)

DIANE. Oh! Are you going to ask them to stop for tea?

RECTOR. Not unless you want me to.

DIANE. I don't, unless you want to.

RECTOR. I don't. (DIANE *kisses him lightly and exits U.R., leaving door open, as HANNAH opens door U.L. and HIGGINBOTHAM, SWETT, and NORTON enter.*)

(HIGGINBOTHAM *is a squat, little man of fifty-five,*

*pompous. HIRAM SWETT is a farmer who opposes on principle the spending of money; rangy and fairly tall; speaks with a drawl. ABNER NORTON is a methodical, snappy little man, with a timid little voice.)*

RECTOR. Good afternoon, gentlemen. *(They stand just inside the doorway. HANNAH closes the door.)*

HIGGINBOTHAM. How are ye, Rever-	} <i>(Spoken together)</i>
end?	
NORTON. Good afternoon.	
SWETT. How do you do?	

RECTOR. Won't you take off your coats? *(They have left their hats in the hall, but evidently have agreed that their coats should be kept on.)*

SWETT. *(With a slight grin)* Well, Norton 'lowed we'd better keep 'em on.

HIGGINBOTHAM. We did at the last meetin'.

NORTON. But it's a good sight warmer in here today. Why, look at that! *(He gives a startled look at the fire; then a glance at the Rector; hurries toward the fireplace and holds out his hands, rubbing them vigorously.)*

HIGGINBOTHAM. Well, hello, a fire! *(He follows NORTON and they stand together at the fire, warming themselves. SWETT takes off his coat and gives it to the RECTOR, who lays it on window seat U.C.)*

SWETT. Don't need no coat in here, now. *(He comes D.C. to the register and stands over it. Stamps his feet on it and holds the palms of his hands out to get the benefit of the heat.)* Got your furnace goin' Great Guns, Reverend! *(DR. COBB and JUDGE HASBROUCK are seen going past the window.)*

HIGGINBOTHAM. I guess it's safe enough to shed, Norton.

NORTON. Yes, or we won't feel 'em when we go

out. (HIGGINBOTHAM takes his coat off and NORTON begins unwinding a long tippet around his neck.)

RECTOR. (Going D.R. to NORTON) Let me help you. (He takes the tippet and helps NORTON off with his coat; then takes Higginbotham's coat and carries them up to the window seat, as the door bell rings.)

SWETT. Must be ten below outside.

RECTOR. Just the weather you need for your ice, isn't it?

SWETT. Yes, yes. We start in a-cuttin' tomorrow. (SWETT takes a dining room chair, the one in the third row, and places it above the register, then sits, keeping his feet on the register.)

(NORTON and HIGGINBOTHAM both start to sit in easy chair at the fireplace; then stop and look at each other; then each sits on an arm. HANNAH opens door U.L. and JUDGE HASBROUCK and DR. COBB enter. JUDGE HASBROUCK is a big, humorless man, the lawyer of the village. He loves to make peace and decide disputes. DR. ANDREW COBB is the local practitioner. He is a medium-sized man, very direct.)

RECTOR. Come in, Judge.

JUDGE HASBROUCK. Good afternoon, everybody. (RECTOR crosses HASBROUCK and shakes hands with DR. COBB.)

RECTOR. How are you, Doctor?

COBB. Fine, David, outside of being frozen.

SWETT. Well, if you're froze, you've come to the right place. It's like the Fourth of July in here.

HASBROUCK. (Coming D.C. to SWETT) Thank the Lord for that! (RECTOR places HASBROUCK's coat on window seat and helps COBB off with his. COBB goes to the fireplace and stands before it, warming his hands.)

SWETT. (To HASBROUCK) Feel the heat shootin'

up here! The furnace must be chewin' up coal by the bushel!

HASBROUCK. I should think so!

COBB. That's what a furnace is for. (*He sits abruptly between HIGGINBOTHAM and NORTON in the easy chair. They rise indignantly.*) Well, you boys getting thawed out?

HIGGINBOTHAM. I'm a-gettin' too hot! 'Tain't healthy to keep a room as warm as this, is it, Doc?

DR. COBB. (*Warming his hands*) I don't feel it's injuring my health.

NORTON. Trouble is when you go out. That's what's worryin' me.

SWETT. Well, can't we get started?

RECTOR. (*U.C., fixing the coats, mufflers, etc., on the window seat*) Mr. Jones hasn't come yet. We can't very well go ahead without our Senior War-den.

HIGGINBOTHAM. Al Watrous ain't here nuther.

COBB. No. Nor he won't be.

NORTON. Why, where is he?

COBB. In bed.

HIGGINBOTHAM. Is he sick, Doc?

COBB. Uh, huh.

SWETT. What ails him?

COBB. Gastrodynia.

SWETT. What in tarnation is that?

COBB. Stomach-ache.

NORTON. Mr. Jones ain't sick, is he?

COBB. Not that I know of.

NORTON. Then he's late again. He was at the last meetin'.

SWETT. Well, perhaps, when you get a lim-a-zine automobile, you'll be late! (*MR. MORTON JONES passes the windows.*)

RECTOR. Here he is now! (*Door bell rings.*)

HIGGINBOTHAM. Then let's get a-goin'!



(HIGGINBOTHAM, NORTON and COBB rise and take seats at minister's desk. NORTON takes upstage chair of the first row; HIGGINBOTHAM the chair below him, and COBB the chair below HIGGINBOTHAM.)

COBB. (*As he crosses*) Come along, Judge. Come on, Hi.

SWETT. I'm all right where I be. (JUDGE HASBROUCK takes the down-stage chair of the second row. All sit excepting the RECTOR. HANNAH opens door U.L. and MR. JONES enters.)

(MR. JONES is quite an elderly man, of impressive bearing; fully aware that he is a great man in the village; has no humor and is gratingly practical.)

RECTOR. How do you do, Mr. Jones? Come in.

MR. JONES. (*Nodding to the RECTOR*) Rector! (*Turns to vestry*) Good afternoon, gentlemen.

(HANNAH closes door U.L. NORTON rises; HIGGINBOTHAM, after glancing at NORTON, also rises, and so does SWETT. The other two remain seated. Murmur of "Good afternoon," etc., from all. JONES has come in wearing his coat and scarf. He begins unbuttoning coat, the RECTOR helping him off with it.)

MR. JONES. Dear me, it's unusually warm in here today. (RECTOR takes his coat up to window seat centre.) Well, are we ready?

COBB. Just waitin' for you. (JONES is about to sit, glances at the easy chair D.R., pushes his chair upstage, goes to armchair, wheels it around and pushes it center; then sits.)

JONES. You may call the meeting to order, Rec-

tor. (RECTOR has placed JONES' chair U.R. in front of window seat. Now crosses D.L. below desk to his chair, left of table.)

(Vestrymen, who have been watching JONES, realize that he intends to remain in the big chair throughout the meeting. NORTON rises and draws his end chair above the desk; HIGGINBOTHAM draws his to the right of NORTON and on a line with him; COBB places his right of HIGGINBOTHAM and a little below him; HASBROUCK places WATROUS' chair U.L. of the way, and his own right and a little above COBB's chair. This leaves them as follows:

(RECTOR behind desk; NORTON above desk; HIGGINBOTHAM right of NORTON; COBB right of HIGGINBOTHAM; HASBROUCK right of COBB; SWETT right of HASBROUCK; JONES right center.)

RECTOR. The meeting will please come to order. (He bows his head; all except NORTON bow their heads. NORTON is fumbling nervously through his pockets for the minutes of the last meeting. HIGGINBOTHAM sees him out of the corner of his eye and nudges him sharply in the ribs.)

NORTON. (Glancing angrily at HIGGINBOTHAM) Huh? (Sees bowed heads.) Oh! (He bows his head, but prays and looks in his inside pockets for the minutes at the same time.)

(After a brief pause, the RECTOR raises his head, and all except NORTON follow suit. NORTON's head is down and he continues going through his pockets.)

RECTOR. First, we'll listen to the reading of the minutes of the last meeting.

NORTON. (*Still with bowed head*) I can't find 'em.

HIGGINBOTHAM. What'cha doin' — prayin' for help?

NORTON. (*Looking at him*) Huh? (*He realizes that his head has been bowed.*) Oh!

DR. COBB. As the clerk has fortunately lost the minutes, I suggest that the reading of the same be dispensed with. (*RECTOR rises, goes U.C. and looks through NORTON's overcoat pockets.*)

NORTON. (*Rising and searching his pockets again*) I couldn't 'a' lost 'em. I took 'em up the last thing before I left the house. I remember right where I was standin' when I took 'em.

SWETT. (*Who has risen and stood watching him interestedly*) You ain't tried your pants pockets.

NORTON. (*Scornfully, but searching pants pockets*) I wouldn't put minutes in my pants pockets! They ought to be in this pocket right here. (*He indicates his inside coat pocket.*)

(*RECTOR comes to NORTON with small minute book.*)

RECTOR. Here you are, Abner. (*SWETT grins and sits.*)

NORTON. (*Grabbing the book with great relief*) Where did you find it?

RECTOR. (*Sitting*) In your overcoat.

NORTON. You did? Well, that's right! That's where it was! (*He sits slowly.*) I remember now. I was goin' to put it in this pocket; then, thinks I, I'll put on my coat first, and I went and got the coat, and then come back and got the book, and, you see, having my coat on before I picked the book up . . .

COBB. I call it a perfect explanation.

NORTON. (*To DR. COBB*) I didn't have no no-

tion what could have become of it, till I remembered about my overcoat.

HIGGINBOTHAM. It's been proposed that the reading of the minutes be dispensed with—and I'm in favor of it.

NORTON. (*Greatly disappointed, looks at each member of the vestry; turns to the RECTOR with a smile; then back to HIGGINBOTHAM.*) Well, dispense with 'em, if you want to! Only, what's the use of my goin' to all the trouble of writin' 'em if they ain't to be read?

SWETT. How long will it take?

NORTON. 'Twon't take no time at all.

SWETT. Well, let him read 'em, he's got his heart set on it.

JONES Mr. Clerk, do proceed. (NORTON gives JONES a grateful look, picks up book of minutes, looks at it, then puts his hands up to his eyes, puts book back on desk and begins going through his pockets again.)

SWETT. By cracky, he's got the wrong book!

NORTON. No, I ain't. I'm lookin' for my glasses.

SWETT. (*Plainly disgusted at this delay*) Well, let the Reverend read the minutes while you're huntin' for 'em.

NORTON. (*Delightedly taking pair of spectacles from his vest pocket*) I've got 'em! (*He hurriedly and nervously puts them on, opens book and begins reading pages silently, hunting for the right meeting.*)

SWETT. (*After a short pause*) What in tarnation are ya waitin' for now?

NORTON. I'm findin' the place. (*Nervously turns pages.*)

RECTOR. (*With a smile*) It's all right, Abner, we're in no hurry.

NORTON. Here it is. (*Attempting to show the book to RECTOR.*) Right where I got the page turned

down! (*He rises, comes out in front of the desk, looks about the room, taking in each of his auditors, then clears his throat.*) "The four hundred and twenty-first meetin' of the vestry of St. Mark's Church in Dedham was held in the rectory at five o'clock P.M. on December the fifth inst., in the year of our Lord, nineteen hundred and twenty."

DR. COBB. And a good time was had by all! (*NORTON lowers the book and turns to COBB with a withering glance; picks up book again.*)

NORTON. "—in the year of our Lord, nineteen hundred and twenty. The hull—— (*JUDGE HASBROUCK rises from his chair, sighs, turns up and goes to window U.C. and looks out, his hands in his pockets, plainly bored by NORTON'S recital. NORTON looks at him wonderingly and continues*) The hull vestry was present. The meetin' was opened with silent prayer, as is our custom. Followin' the prayer, the minutes of the previous meetin' was read by the Clerk of the Vestry." (*He glances about the room, puts the book down and begins feeling through his pockets again.*)

SWETT. Now, what's he lookin' fer? (*NORTON continues searching through his pockets as he glances coldly at SWETT; then draws handkerchief from pants pocket and blows his nose violently; carefully wraps and places handkerchief in his vest pocket; thinks about it, removes it and replaces it in his pants pocket.*)

COBB. I move the minutes be approved as read! (*NORTON looks at him reprovngly; then removes his glasses, puts them in his left hand, in which hand he holds the minute book, one finger keeping his place.*)

NORTON. I know you think it's mighty smart, Dr. Cobb, to always be a-pokin' fun at everybody, but I don't think a vestry meetin' is no place for fun, and if the Rector feels backward about askin' you to stop it, I'd just as soon ask you for him.

COBB. I beg your pardon, Abner. *(He winks at the RECTOR and the RECTOR tries not to show that NORTON is amusing him.)*

NORTON. Well, then, I beg yours.

SWETT. Oh, go ahead, Ab. We ain't got all night. *(NORTON opens book and once more starts to read; finds that his glasses are gone; swiftly goes over his pockets and the table with one hand; finally discovers them in the other and puts them on. HASBROUCK leaves the window and comes back to his chair and sits.)*

NORTON. "The matter of a new carpet for the chancel was brought up for discussion by the Rector. The Rector and Vestryman Cobb was in favor of the carpet. Mr. Morton Jones and others was undecided. After discussion, the carpet was laid on the table. Followin' the carpet, the rector took up a leak in the roof and a committee was appointed to look into it. Followin' that, the windin' of the church clock was took up, Freddy Stoner who's been a-doin' the windin' havin' proved unreliable. After discussion, it was voted that the windin' be offered to Sexton Joseph Willetts, at a dollar and a half (one-fifty), per month additional salary." *(He lowers the book, pushes glasses up on his forehead and looks about the room.)* I might say in regards to that, that Joe took the job, and we ain't had no more trouble about the clock till this last cold spell froze her up. *(He refers to book again, clears throat, pulls glasses down and continues reading)* "Followin' that, a few remarks was heard from the rector in regards to an increase in his salary." *(There is a pause in which the vestrymen look at one another.)* "Followin' that, Warden Jones made a motion that the four hundred and twenty-first meetin' of the Vestry of St. Mark's Church be adjourned. The Clerk of the Vestry, Abner G. Norton, seconded the motion and it was unanimously carried." *(NORTON*

*goes above desk, sits; with a glance of pride about the room, he waits for the minutes to be approved.)*

RECTOR. Gentlemen, you've heard the reading of the minutes of the last meeting.

COBB. I move they be approved—as read!

HASBROUCK. Second the motion.

RECTOR. All those in favor . . .

EVERYBODY. Aye.

RECTOR. Contrary-minded—— It is so voted.

*(NORTON smiles, approves the minutes in his book and prepares to take notes of the business of this meeting. Throughout the meeting he listens to each member as he speaks, making notes.)*

HIGGINBOTHAM. *(Rising impressively)* Mr. Warden, there's a matter that I think ought to be took up right away. *(Pause.)*

COBB. Well, up with it!

HIGGINBOTHAM. It's about coal bein' stole out of the church bins. *(Surprise from all.)* It's been brought to my notice that five wheelbarrow loads have been took away, and I'd like to inquire if anybody here knows anything about it?

RECTOR. I know all about it. I took it. *(All except COBB regard the RECTOR with surprise. HIGGINBOTHAM looks slowly at each vestryman, then sits.)*

JONES. *(After HIGGINBOTHAM is seated)* Where did you take it?

MORTON JONES. Three loads went to Myra Moreland and two to the Italian family down in White's Marsh.

JONES. When did this occur?

RECTOR. Day before yesterday.

JONES. By whose authority?

RECTOR. Mine.

JONES. *(After a slight pause)* You know very

well that all matters regarding church property must be brought up before the vestry.

RECTOR. But these were emergency cases.

JONES. That rule applies to any case. If you'll remember, we've gone into these matters several times before.

RECTOR. But, Mr. Jones, those people might have frozen.

SWETT. Why, the Eye-talian family ain't in the parish,—be they, Reverend?

RECTOR. No. But they were just as cold as if they had been.

SWETT. That ain't the p'int. Now . . .

COBB. Well, if it isn't—in Heaven's name, what is?

JONES. The point is, Doctor, that these matters should be handled in a systematic way. The money we buy coal with is not collected for charity work.

RECTOR. I could have notified the vestry if I'd thought of it. Oh, that reminds me. I've ordered a ton of coal to be sent to each of those families.

(COBB grins. *The vestrymen look at JONES.*)

JONES. (*Rising slowly*) You've ordered two tons of coal to be sent to those families?

RECTOR. Yes. I only took a little from the church to tide them over until Cadwell had some more come in.

JONES. I don't want to be unpleasant, but you must understand that you have no right to involve the parish in such expenditures.

RECTOR. But, Mr. Jones, I'm sure you would all do just as I do if you knew the needs of our poor people. I never do as much as I'd like to—and often not as much as I feel I ought to.

JONES. But you haven't the right to do anything. Why can't you see that?





"THANK YOU"



RECTOR. (*Simply, but with great sincerity*) But these people were in distress.

JONES. People in distress can be relieved just as well if you follow the rules I've pointed out. (*He sits.*) And I believe, gentlemen, that this order for coal should be countermanded.

RECTOR. (*Rising quickly*) Oh, you wouldn't do that! Besides, I intend to pay for that coal out of the hundred dollars Sophia Jamieson gave me last month.

HIGGINBOTHAM. She give you that money to use for the church.

RECTOR. Yes, but to use in any way I saw fit.

COBB. (*Delighted at the turn the matter has taken—slaps his hands loudly*) Say, that's great! Of course, the rector's within his rights. Why don't you fellows have a little consideration and stop picking on him?

HASBROUCK. (*Rising*) I feel in this case with Dr. Cobb—that the rector should be allowed to use that bequest as he wishes; but I also agree with Mr. Jones—that we must have some system observed regarding our parish work. We want the rector to feel that we are behind him in all his charitable endeavors . . .

COBB. (*Breaking in*) You bet we are! A long way behind him!

HASBROUCK. (*Glancing at COBB and smiling tolerantly*) But also, we want him to realize our position and understand that we are responsible to the church for all expenditures. (*He sits.*)

NORTON. Is the committee ready to report regarding the increase in the rector's salary? (*The vestrymen turn expectantly to JONES.*)

JONES. (*After a slight pause, rises*) Your committee has come to the conclusion that the question should be decided by the parish. Our rector's present salary has gone on for years now without any question of its being insufficient. We know it is

small, but still it is quite up to the average of what clergymen receive in communities of this size. We wish him to have everything for his comfort, but I think you will all agree with me that our dear rector has no idea of money. I do not say this unkindly. I rather think it makes us love him all the more. (*There is a moment's embarrassed pause, broken by the sudden sound of coal being scraped together and shoveled into the furnace. SWETT pushes his chair back from the register.*)

SWETT. It's gettin' too hot here for me.

JONES. (*With a glance at the fireplace*) Stories have come to us of new and unusual extravagances in the rectory. Naturally the rector wishes the new member of his household to have everything her heart desires, but I doubt if he has realized what a vast difference in expense these luxuries will amount to. (*He goes left and addresses the* RECTOR.) Frankly, Rector, we feel that you should have a plain talk with your niece—try to make her understand your position, bring her down to earth, as it were. And then, I believe—I promise nothing—but I believe your friends will rally 'round you and assist you. (*He turns slowly and walks right.*) We have deemed it inadvisable to call a special meeting of the parish and think it will be ample time to bring up the question of salary at the annual meeting next spring. (*He sits slowly.*)

RECTOR. Gentlemen, you have heard the committee's decision. (*COBB rises slowly.*) I think nothing further need be said on the subject.

COBB. You mean you don't want it discussed?

RECTOR. I'd rather it wouldn't be. (*COBB sits.*)

JONES. I hope you don't think I meant to be unkind.

RECTOR. I'm sure you didn't. And that thought is a great comfort to me. (*The door U.L. is thrown open and JOE WILLETTS enters with a large armful of*

*wood. He hesitates a moment as he notices a meeting is in progress.)*

WILLETTS. Oh! Excuse me. *(He goes right to settle and throws in wood.)*

RECTOR. Is there any further business?

COBB. I move we adjourn.

NORTON. I second that motion. *(WILLETTS exits as quickly as possible.)*

RECTOR. If there is no objection, the meeting is adjourned.

*(All rise, except NORTON. COBB goes U.C. quickly and gets coat; takes it D.L. and puts it on; HIGGINBOTHAM and SWETT go U.C. for their coats. JONES turns easy chair around front as HASBROUCK comes to him R.C. HANNAH enters, places chair U.R. in its original place beside small table U.R. and exits, taking off the two dining-room chairs R.C. RECTOR goes U.C. and helps men with coats, etc.)*

HASBROUCK. *(In an undertone to JONES)* Your remarks were capital, Morton, perfectly splendid. *(They cross U.C. to window seat.)*

JONES. Thank you, Judge. I only said what I felt. *(They get their coats. RECTOR comes D.L. to COBB and helps him on with coat. NORTON's tippet is hanging down from the inside of the doctor's overcoat, and when he has put the coat on, the tippet drags on the floor. HIGGINBOTHAM and SWETT bring their coats D.R. and help each other.)*

COBB. How did you come over, Abner? *(NORTON is so engrossed that he doesn't hear him.)* Hey! Clerk of the Vestry! *(HIGGINBOTHAM notices the tippet and calls SWETT's attention to it.)*

NORTON. *(Without looking up and writing rapidly)* What do you want?

COBB. Did you ride over here or walk?

NORTON. (*Still writing rapidly*) I come a-foot. I wouldn't leave no horse standin' outside in weather like this. (HIGGINBOTHAM *crosses to* COBB. SWETT *stops him quickly and* HIGGINBOTHAM *crosses back to* SWETT.)

SWETT. (*In an undertone*) Len! (HIGGINBOTHAM *crosses back to* SWETT.) It's Ab's! (HIGGINBOTHAM *grins. They stand and watch* NORTON *and* COBB.)

COBB. Well, I'm going past your store. I'll take you back. (NORTON *looks at him vacantly.*)

NORTON. I want to get that point right, about luxury and extravagance. (*The phrasing strikes him suddenly and he begins writing rapidly.*)

COBB. Well, I can't wait for that. I got half a dozen more calls before supper. (*He crosses U.L. and speaks to* RECTOR.) Don't mind 'em, David. They'll come around all right after they're done shootin' off their mouths. (*Pulls cap from pocket and puts it on. Pauses a moment, surveying the vestry.*) Good afternoon—Christians! (*He exits hurriedly.*)

JONES. (*Coming centre to* RECTOR *and shaking hands*) Try to think that what I said was for your own good, Rector.

RECTOR. I will. (JONES *and* HASBROUCK *exit through door* U.L., HANNAH *handing them their hats.*)

JONES. May I drop you at your house, Judge?

HASBROUCK. Why, thank you. (*Comes to doorway* U.L.) Good afternoon, all. (*They exit, HANNAH opening and closing front door. HIGGINBOTHAM stops and shakes hands with* RECTOR.)

HIGGINBOTHAM. Don't have no ill feeling, Rector, and just let what Mr. Jones said sink in.

RECTOR. It did sink in, Leonard.

HIGGINBOTHAM. That's good. I'm glad to hear it. Come on, Hi.

SWETT. (*Shaking hands awkwardly with the rector*) Well . . . Good day!

RECTOR. Good afternoon, Hiram. (*HIGGINBOTHAM and SWETT exit U.L., glancing back at NORTON and grinning. HANNAH opens the door for them, hands them their hats and closes door after them. NORTON rises, goes to window seat.*)

RECTOR. (*Going for NORTON'S coat as soon as he rises, comes D.C. to him*) Let me give you a lift.

NORTON. (*Handing him the minute book*) You just hang onto the minutes for me. (*He gets into overcoat.*) I thought I'd lost 'em sure. Fine meetin', warn't it? Mr. Jones and the Judge is born orators. (*RECTOR goes U.C., gets NORTON'S hat and brings it down to him—he puts it on and reaches out for the minute book.*) Now give me the minutes. I'll put 'em in the right pocket this time. (*He puts the minutes in his inside coat pocket. He draws his coat together to button it, puts his hand to neck to knot tippet; finds it gone.*) Now, where's my tippet? (*He goes directly to window seat and begins a search for it.*)

RECTOR. Oh! (*He follows NORTON U.C., finds tippet has disappeared.*) Why, it ought to be here!

NORTON. Well, don't you know where it is? You took it offen me.

RECTOR. I thought I laid it here.

NORTON. Well, it 'tain't there, is it?

RECTOR. No. (*He comes down to settle and looks around. NORTON gets down on his hands and knees and looks under the window seat, first one side and then the other.*)

NORTON. Next time I'll take it off myself! If I don't stop losin' things, I'll go plumb crazy, I know I will. (*The RECTOR, turning back U.C., happens to glance out of the window.*)

RECTOR. That looks like it out there in the snow!

NORTON. (*Pulling his head out from under the*

*old valance of the window seat*) Out in the snow! (*He clambers up on the window seat and looks out, startled.*) Why, 'tis it! (*He turns to the RECTOR.*) Now, how in the name of the Old Harry did you happen to put it out in the yard?

RECTOR. I can't imagine how it got there!

NORTON. (*Looking at him scornfully*) Well, the point is—'tis there!

RECTOR. (*Looking out of window again*) There it goes—blowing away!

NORTON. (*Turning quickly*) Good Lord! Stop 'er! (*He rushes out, HANNAH opening the front door for him, and saying as he goes*) I ain't a-goin' to forget this meetin' for one spell. (*He is seen running off left after tippet and a moment later crossing windows, U.C., winding tippet around neck. RECTOR watches him off. HANNAH enters U.L. and takes the two dining-room chairs L. DIANE appears in doorway U.R.*)

HANNAH. Do you want I should make tea?

RECTOR. Yes, Hannah, if you will.

HANNAH. (*Coming back to door U.L. to shut it*) Jest as you say. (*She closes door U.L. RECTOR walks slowly D.R. to easy chair and sits. DIANE, who has listened to all that has gone on at the meeting, comes down to him quietly. She stops above his chair and puts her hands on his shoulders.*)

RECTOR. (*Looking up at her brightly*) Where did you come from?

DIANE. (*Taking a step R.C.*) I've been listening to everything that was said at the meeting. (*RECTOR turns quickly.*) Uncle, don't you think you could get a church somewhere else?

RECTOR. Why, Diane, would you want me to do that?

DIANE. (*Crossing to him*) Wouldn't you like to—if you could?

RECTOR. (*Lightly*) Leave Dedham? Leave my



people? Why, I wouldn't even know how to think of such a thing! Why, I've lived here all my life, Diane!

DIANE. (*Her surprise growing*) But didn't you resent what those men said? Didn't it make you hate them?

RECTOR. Hate them? Why, Diane, they're all my friends—my best friends! You don't know them.

DIANE. (*Crossing above chair to fireplace*) I'm afraid you're the one who doesn't know them.

RECTOR. (*Turning to her*) Why do you think that?

DIANE. Well, . . . (*She turns and comes back to him.*) Uncle, what did you go into the ministry for?

RECTOR. Because I liked it.

DIANE. Wasn't it because you thought you could do good?

RECTOR. Yes, that, too.

DIANE. And after trying to teach those—those vestrymen Christianity for thirty years, you can listen to them talk as they did today and not realize that all your time has been wasted?

RECTOR. It hasn't been wasted, Diane. But you can't make people over. I learned that long ago.

DIANE. (*Sitting on the R. arm of the Rector's chair, facing U.C.*) Then what can you do for them?

RECTOR. Understand them—discover the good in them—love them.

DIANE. Do you remember our talk after church last Sunday?

RECTOR. Let me see! We've had so many wonderful talks since you came.

DIANE. I told you what I thought of your sermon.

RECTOR. (*With a laugh*) Oh, yes. And you almost convinced me that I was a great preacher.

DIANE. (*Earnestly*) You are. Why, you just carried me away. I forgot you were my uncle. I forgot where I was. I forgot everything, except that I was looking at life in a new way—and when I told you about it, afterwards, you said, “Oh, Diane, if I could only make my congregation feel as you do.”

RECTOR. Yes, I did.

DIANE. Well, why can't you?

RECTOR. Why, because . . . (*Realizes he can't answer her question.*) Well, that's a good deal of a question.

DIANE. (*Gently*) It's very simple to me. (RECTOR *turns to her quickly.*) Why, you're devoting your life to doing good and trying to make men and women better, and you're spoiling your chance of doing it by what you let them think of you. (RECTOR *rises slowly and crosses to fireplace.* DIANE *turns on arm of chair and watches him.*) How can they appreciate your sermons when they don't appreciate you? They can't look up to you on Sunday when they've been looking down on you all the rest of the week.

RECTOR. You think there's something I might do that would make my work in the parish of more value?

DIANE. (*Who has risen and gone to him D.R.*) I'm sure of it. To begin with, you ought not to accept any more tips.

THE RECTOR. But how can I refuse donations without giving offense, and what's more important, how are we going to live without donations? Why, just think, Diane, my salary is only two dollars and twenty cents a day. It would mean privation for you!

DIANE. I don't care about that. (*She turns to him suddenly.*) Do you?

RECTOR. Why, Diane, if I could see any way to

make my work accomplish real results, I'd be willing to live on air.

DIANE. So would I! Uncle, would you let me be your housekeeper and see if we could possibly get along without donations?

RECTOR. You'd really like to have me turn the running of the house over to you?

DIANE. Oh, yes! I'd like to show those vestrymen of yours that we can be just as economical and business-like as they are, and make every one of them ashamed of the salary you're getting!

RECTOR. (*After a short pause*) Well, dear, let's try it.

DIANE. Do you mean it?

RECTOR. Indeed I mean it!

DIANE. It may end by our being thrown out of church and riding away on a rail!

RECTOR. All right. That certainly would be an adventure.

DIANE. Then no more luxuries! (*She starts to door U.L.*)

RECTOR. You don't mean tea and cakes?

DIANE. Yes, and all the other things. (*She crosses U.L.*)

RECTOR. (*Taking a step R.C.*) But, Diane, tea is ordered for today. (*DIANE stops center and turns to him.*) If we didn't have it now it would just be wasted. (*He goes to her center and pleads.*) Don't let's begin till tomorrow morning!

DIANE. (*Adopting a motherly tone*) Very well, we'll start tomorrow. (*She goes U.R. and pushes the small table to front of settle. RECTOR pushes easy chair U.R. above alcove. Places small chair below easy chair, facing table.*) And I'm through with my French frocks—they've done enough damage already. Perhaps I can sell them.

RECTOR. Oh, that would be dreadful! Why, you have some I've never seen you wear.

DIANE. And you never will.

RECTOR. Suppose we celebrate our last tea by your putting on a new one!

DIANE. (*Crossing to him center*) That isn't the way to begin.

RECTOR. But we're agreed not to begin until tomorrow!

DIANE. All right! I'll put one on for tea. (*A chauffeur is seen passing windows.*)

RECTOR. And then wear another for supper?

DIANE. And after supper you want me to put on an evening gown?

RECTOR. (*Taking her hands*) That's the idea, and we'll sit up till twelve o'clock and watch the old life out and the new life in. (*Door bell rings.*)

DIANE. There's someone calling. I'll run up and decorate myself. (*DIANE goes hurriedly U.R.*)

RECTOR. Diane! (*DIANE turns U.R.* RECTOR goes U.R.C. to her, takes her head between his hands and kisses her on the forehead.) I'd like to tell you how proud I am of you, but I don't know how!

DIANE. Then try to think how and tell me at tea time. (*CHAUFFEUR is seen going L. to R. beyond windows. DIANE exits U.R. as HANNAH enters U.L., excitedly.*)

HANNAH. Mr. Kenneth Jamieson's comin' in to see you, sir!

RECTOR. (*Turning D.C.*) Where is he?

HANNAH. Out in his automobile. His shoofur come to the door and asked if there was a minister livin' here, and then he wanted to know if you was officiatin' at old Miss Jamieson's funeral. (*KENNETH JAMIESON in a heavy overcoat is seen slowly crossing behind the windows, right to left. HANNAH points him out to the RECTOR and continues in a whisper*) Look, that's him now! (*She hurries out U.L. to let him in, saying as she goes*) I never seen anybody like his shoofur. (*She reaches the*

door just as KENNETH gets to the step.) Just come in, sir. (KENNETH JAMIESON enters and HANNAH closes the door. He is an unusually attractive, well-dressed young man-about-town. Decidedly the university type, a graduate of Harvard. His voice is quiet and very well bred. He is dressed in the easy, effortless way of the well-bred Englishman. Wears a dark, simply-cut suit, heavy overcoat and scarf. Tempermentally he is impulsive; does anything that occurs to him; his face has lines of dissipation, though his build is athletic, and his eyes steady and clear. In short, he is a thoroughly unprincipled, charming fellow who never in his life has had to exert himself. This is his first visit to a Rectory.)

RECTOR. (From D.C.) Mr. Jamieson? (KENNETH turns in doorway.)

KENNETH. (After a slight pause, in which he begins taking off gloves) Yes, sir?

RECTOR. Won't you come in here? (KENNETH glances at HANNAH, removes hat and enters. HANNAH closes door U.L. RECTOR offers his hand; KENNETH shakes hands solemnly.) I'm Mr. Lee.

KENNETH. How do you do, sir.

RECTOR. (Going behind him and slipping off his coat) Let me help you off with your coat.

KENNETH. Thanks. But I'm not going to stay long, you know. (RECTOR puts the coat on the window seat. KENNETH lays his hat on the RECTOR's desk.)

RECTOR. Did Mrs. Jones suggest your seeing me?

KENNETH. Who?

RECTOR. Mrs. Jones.

KENNETH. (Fishing the telegram out of his pocket, opening it and looking at the signature) Mrs. Morton Jones?

RECTOR. Yes.

KENNETH. No, she wished me to see her. (He

*goes up R.C. and hands telegram to the* RECTOR.)  
That is, she sent me this.

RECTOR. Oh, you haven't seen her?

KENNETH. No.

RECTOR. (*Glancing at the telegram*) Why, she went to meet you on the four-ten.

KENNETH. Meet me on what?

RECTOR. On the four-ten train.

KENNETH. Oh! I motored up here.

RECTOR. Motored from New York! Why, you must be frozen.

KENNETH. Oh, I don't mind the cold—dressed for it.

RECTOR. Do come over by the fire.

KENNETH. (*Taking the small chair up left and bringing it down L.C., sits*) This is all right, thanks. I just wanted to ask you something.

RECTOR. But hadn't you better let Mrs. Jones know where you are?

KENNETH. Why? (*Takes telegram from RECTOR, tears it in two pieces and drops them in coat pocket.*)

RECTOR. She's going to put you up while you're here.

KENNETH. Oh, no, she isn't. I sent word that I'm staying at my aunt's house.

RECTOR. (*Taking chair U.R. and sitting R.C.*) Oh! I'm deeply sorry for the sad errand which brings you to Dedham.

KENNETH. What? Oh, yes. That's what I wanted to ask you about. You were my aunt's minister, weren't you? I mean, she belonged to your church and all that?

RECTOR. Yes, and we shall miss her sadly. Your aunt was a really remarkable woman, Mr. Jamieson, and she was . . .

KENNETH. (*Breaking in*) Yes, of course, but I

wanted to ask you about the funeral. My father sent me up here to take charge of it.

RECTOR. So Mrs. Jones told me.

KENNETH. (*Looking up at him suddenly*) Say, who is this Mrs. Jones? Is she a relative or anything?

RECTOR. (*Smiling*) No, but she's a member of the parish. Her husband is our Senior Warden.

KENNETH. Oh! Does a warden's wife run the funerals?

RECTOR. (*Smilingly*) No, but as none of your family were here, Mrs. Jones has been doing what she can.

KENNETH. Why? Did anybody ask her to?

RECTOR. No. But she telegraphed your father and offered her services, and his secretary called up from California and told her that you were coming on to take charge.

KENNETH. Yes, that's what I want to ask you. You see, I never knew my aunt—only met her once or twice in my life and . . .

RECTOR. I'll be very glad to tell you about her. (*Light outside dim slowly; room light also fades out very slowly.*)

KENNETH. (*Quickly*) Oh, that isn't what I come for. It's about the funeral. Now that the thing's been put up to me, I'd like to have it go off all right. I want to find out what I've got to do, and I thought you'd be the best one to tip me off. You see, funerals have never been my long suit. (*He breaks off confusedly, conscious that the RECTOR is watching him intently, steadily growing disapproval showing in his face.*) I mean, I've never gone in for them. And I'm afraid I'll be all mixed up. You know, I won't know where to stand, and when to sit down and get up, and everything like that. You're all right at a wedding, because they have a rehearsal and you only have to remember the way you did it before. (*There*

*is a slight pause and then the RECTOR speaks incredulously.)*

RECTOR. You don't know our form of burial service?

KENNETH. (*Uncomfortably*) No, sir.

RECTOR. (*Rising and going to his desk D.L. for prayer book*) It's very beautiful. It makes one feel the glory and majesty of death. (*KENNETH twists in his chair and faces front. RECTOR hands him the book.*) I wish you'd read it, Mr. Jamieson. I'm sure it would surprise you.

KENNETH. (*Taking the book and looking up at the RECTOR*) So am I. It would surprise my friends, too. (*He looks over book and reads a few lines, the RECTOR watching him closely. KENNETH looks up at him again.*) Isn't this what you're going to say at the funeral?

RECTOR. Yes.

KENNETH. (*Handing the book to the RECTOR*) Then there's no good my reading it, unless there's something there about the mourners.

RECTOR. (*Still displeased with KENNETH's attitude*) It might be well for you to read it, Mr. Jamieson—and a number of other things in this book. But you needn't worry about your part in the service. You have nothing to do.

KENNETH. (*With relief, rising*) Haven't I?

RECTOR. Not a thing. (*He replaces prayer book on desk.*)

KENNETH. Oh! Then it's all right. Thank you very much. (*He goes U.C. to window seat and gets coat.*)

RECTOR. Of course there are arrangements to be made.

KENNETH. (*D.C., putting on his coat*) Oh! What are they?

RECTOR. Well, you should decide whether to have the service at your aunt's house or at the church.



KENNETH. Why, that's just as you say.

RECTOR. Then I'd advise the church.

KENNETH. All right! Suits me!

RECTOR. And the hour?

KENNETH. Just as soon as possible.

RECTOR. Tomorrow at three?

KENNETH. Good. (*He goes L. below* RECTOR *to desk and picks up hat and gloves.*)

RECTOR. Of course, you'll want to see the undertaker.

KENNETH. (*Turning slowly*) Oh, do I?

RECTOR. Oh, yes. There are a number of things to arrange with him. With this severe weather I'd suggest that he has a covering for the service at the grave.

KENNETH. I thought you said the service would be in the church.

RECTOR. But we go from the church to the grave.

KENNETH. Oh, Lord, you have *two* services?

RECTOR. Yes.

KENNETH. And don't I have anything to do there either?

RECTOR. Nothing but to be there. (*He puts chair L.C. up left at door.*)

KENNETH. Thank you very much. (*He starts for door U.L.—stops suddenly.*) Oh, I forgot. (*He comes D.L., takes out wallet and draws out a hundred-dollar bill.*) I don't know the right way to do it, but if you'll accept this . . . (*He puts the money in the RECTOR's hands, closes wallet and puts it in his pocket.*)

RECTOR. (*Looking at the bill*) A hundred dollars! Why . . . (*He turns suddenly and looks at door U.R., thinking of DIANE.*) Thank you, Mr. Jamieson, but I can't take it!

KENNETH. (*Taking bill*) I beg your pardon, I thought it was customary. I know my father would want you to. (*He hurries on as the RECTOR is about*

*to protest.*) It isn't costing me anything. It'll go into the bill of expenses. If you can't accept it for the funeral, couldn't you for some other reason?

RECTOR. (*Half-reaching for the money*) Why, yes, I could. . . . (*He withdraws his hand quickly.*) This is extraordinary. Mr. Jamieson. My niece and I have been having a talk on the subject of donations and fees. She's just come to live with me and she's decided to be my housekeeper and show me how to practice economy.

KENNETH. Well, you give her this to practice on.

RECTOR. I don't think she'd want me to take it.

KENNETH. Try it, anyway.

RECTOR. No. I'd rather . . . (*He turns to door U.R.*) Suppose you ask her!

KENNETH. No, thanks! (*RECTOR turns quickly and looks at him.*) I mean, I've got to get over to my aunt's house.

RECTOR. But I'd so like to have you meet my niece. We're just going to have tea. Won't you join us?

KENNETH. Oh, I couldn't possibly. I must hunt up the undertaker. (*He goes to door U.L. and opens it.*)

RECTOR. I'm very sorry. (*DIANE opens door U.R. and enters the door, closing smartly after her. She is dressed in her smartest French tea gown. KENNETH turns and stands motionless with his hands on the doorknob. DIANE, seeing KENNETH, also pauses. RECTOR looks smilingly from one to the other.*) Diane, this is Mr. Jamieson. (*To KENNETH*) My niece, Miss Lee.

DIANE. (*Bowing pleasantly and coming R.C.*) How do you do?

KENNETH. (*Coming slowly L.C. and shaking hands*) How do you do? (*HANNAH enters U.L. with tea tray, crosses down R.C., and puts it on the small table.*)

DIANE. Aren't you stopping for tea, Mr. Jamieson?

HANNAH. I brought three cups.

RECTOR. Unfortunately, Mr. Jamieson can't stay.

DIANE. (*Smiling at KENNETH*) Oh, I am sorry.

KENNETH. (*Drawing off his gloves and unbuttoning his coat*) Are you? I wouldn't have you sorry for the world. (*HANNAH exits U.L., closing door.*)

RECTOR. Will you change your mind?

KENNETH. I have changed it. (*DIANE smiles at him, goes to mantel, takes cigarette case, goes up to table and sits behind it, on settle.*)

RECTOR. (*Again helping KENNETH with his coat, and taking it and hat to window seat*) That's splendid!

KENNETH. (*Coming D.C.*) It would be a shame not to have that third cup used. (*He picks up chair R.C. and brings it left of table.*)

DIANE. (*Glancing at him*) I imagine this is your second tea today, Mr. Jamieson.

KENNETH. No, it's my first for six months.

DIANE. (*Putting tea-ball in teapot and opening cigarette case*) Oh! I understood Mrs. Jones to say she was expecting you.

KENNETH. (*Sitting left of table*) Oh, yes, I'd forgotten that! Can't I help you some way?

DIANE. There's nothing to do but to let it steep a moment. (*Offers him cigarette case.*) Cigarette? (*KENNETH looks at it in astonishment; then glances at the RECTOR, who has come R. and is standing smiling at the fireplace; then he takes one.*)

KENNETH. Thanks very much. (*DIANE offers case to RECTOR.*)

DIANE. You have one.

RECTOR. Huh? Upon my soul, I believe I will. (*He takes one and sits in small chair R. of DIANE. KENNETH gives another look of surprise at the REC-*

TOR, who is handling his cigarette awkwardly. DIANE helps herself to one, knocks it expertly on the case. KENNETH lights match, holds it for DIANE; rises and goes below table to RECTOR.)

KENNETH. Will you have a light?

RECTOR. Thank you. (KENNETH lights the RECTOR'S cigarette; is about to light his own when DIANE stops him.)

DIANE. Oh! Not three with one match! (At her cry, KENNETH blows out match, throws it in fireplace and crosses to chair L. of table.)

KENNETH. That would have been dreadful, wouldn't it? (He lights his cigarette. It is dark outside, and in the room the light of the fire blazing in the fireplace throws a red glow over the scene in the alcove.)

DIANE. (Putting down her cigarette and pouring tea) Lemon or cream?

KENNETH. Lemon and no sugar, please. (RECTOR lifts napkin over plate and peeps at pastry underneath.)

DIANE. (Putting down cup she has filled) I'm sorry we have no rum. (KENNETH glances in astonishment at the RECTOR, and notices that he is still smiling serenely. Pauses a moment, looks quickly at DIANE, rises, goes U.C.; gets pocket flask from overcoat and returns D.R. Meanwhile, DIANE fills second cup.)

KENNETH. (With hesitation) Well,—if—if—anyone would care for a drop of Scotch? (RECTOR looks up at him and shakes his head.)

DIANE. (Pouring cup) Not I, thanks.

KENNETH. (Apologetically) You see, it's pretty cold today and I came in an open car . . .

DIANE. And you believe in preparedness. (She offers the RECTOR cup of tea.) Uncle? (KENNETH lays flask on settee.)

RECTOR. Thanks, dear. (*DIANE offers the second cup to KENNETH.*)

DIANE. Mr. Jamieson?

KENNETH. Thank you.

RECTOR. (*Removing a good-sized napkin from the plate and showing the cakes*) And here's a surprise!

DIANE. (*Taking a cake*) Oh, Uncle, how lovely!

RECTOR. I thought they'd surprise you. (*He offers cakes to KENNETH.*) Mr. Jamieson? (*KENNETH takes one.*) We have a French baker in the village now, and his wife made these especially for my niece.

KENNETH. Why, I've seen them just like that in Paris. In some big tea shop!

DIANE. Rumpelmayer's?

KENNETH. Yes, that's it! It was right next the hotel where I stopped.

DIANE. Oh, the Hotel Meurice, on the Rue de Rivoli!

KENNETH. (*With great surprise*) Say! you know Paris, don't you?

RECTOR. Diane was born there, Mr. Jamieson—lived in France all her life!

KENNETH. (*Looking at her with new curiosity and pulling his chair a little closer to the table*) Is that so! (*They begin eating cake and drinking tea.*)

DIANE. (*Referring to the cakes*) They're awfully good!

KENNETH. Aren't they?

RECTOR. (*Smiling at them; looking into the fire and then back to the boy and girl*) Isn't this cozy!

KENNETH. And to think I nearly missed it! (*KENNETH leans toward DIANE and they talk smilingly as the Curtain falls.*)

## ACT II

*(Five months have elapsed since Act I. It is about one forty-five in the afternoon of the first balmy spring day of the year.*

*(Another back drop will be used in this set, showing a spring scene instead of the mid-winter scene of the first act; foliage and grass in place of barrenness and snow.*

*(The study is in the throes of spring housecleaning. Pictures have been removed from walls and are piled on floor. Books are piled at the foot of the bookcases. Fireplace has been cleaned out; the carpet has been folded on either side, leaving the alcove and the floor surrounding the RECTOR'S desk bare; easy chair has been pushed in U.R. corner of alcove; table U.R. in Act I has been removed from set. Small chair R.C. on carpet; another turned down on window seat U.C.)*

AT RISE: RECTOR is discovered in his chair at table D.L., writing on sermon. He is wholly absorbed and is writing rapidly on pad of cheap paper.

*(ANDY appears outside above center windows, coming on from L. He carries coil of clothes-line over his arm, looks in window, glances around and exits left.*

*(DIANE enters U.L., being very careful to open and close door noiselessly. She is dressed in rough working clothes, long sleeves rolled up to the elbows, large apron which must give the im-*

*pression that she has been working in it all that morning. Has on cheap, common-sense working shoes or sneakers, and perhaps a white cloth or towel around her head. Carries a small tray on which is a saucer containing "Poor Man's Pudding," a spoon and a glass of water covered over by a napkin. Pauses, while she glances at her uncle and notices that he is absorbed in his work. Then she comes down above his desk, noiselessly puts down the tray on the upper part of desk, is about to turn away when something he has written catches her eye. She takes a step L., stands above him, looking over his shoulder at what he is writing. Her face takes on an expression of interest. RECTOR, unmindful of her presence, tears sheet from pad and puts it face down on a pile of loose sheets. DIANE, without attracting his attention, picks up the sheet and reads, as ANDY reappears above window from L. As he gets C., above window, he sees DIANE in the study. Comes to window and calls to her.)*

ANDY. I'm ready to beat this carpet now.

(DIANE, turning quickly, motions him to be quiet and indicates in pantomime that she doesn't want the RECTOR disturbed. ANDY, understanding, nods apologetically, then tries to ask her with comic pantomime gestures if he can have the carpet. DIANE nods and then conveys to him in pantomime to come into the study. ANDY shows he understands. DIANE motions him to be quiet and ANDY disappears left. ANDY quietly opens door U.L. and enters, carefully shutting door behind him. He comes D.C., looking at DIANE and waiting for orders. She has gone R., picked small chair from carpet, set it in al-

*cove, and now motions ANDY to take D.L. corner of rug. She takes D.R. corner and together they carry the down-stage corners up-stage, repeating this operation until the rug is folded so that they can lift it. ANDY, with DIANE helping him, lifts it to the window and they roll it out. ANDY climbs out the window, drags it off D. As they throw it out, the RECTOR tears another sheet from pad, straightens up, puts down pen, picks up loose sheets, and knocks them on desk to get them even. As he does this, he notices ANDY and DIANE.)*

RECTOR. Well, what's going on?

DIANE. *(Going L. to him)* Now we've disturbed you.

RECTOR. I didn't know you were in here until just now when I came to a stopping place. *(He continues to arrange sheets and then puts them on lower end of the desk and places paper-weight on them. DIANE pushes tray down in front of him, takes off napkin and hands it to him.)*

RECTOR. *(Looking at tray in surprise)* What's the matter? Is it late?

DIANE. *(Looking at church clock, U.C.)* About quarter to two.

RECTOR. Goodness! Where has the time gone? *(DIANE laughs.)*

DIANE. The first thing you always do when you stop working on a sermon is to say, "Where has the time gone?" *(She picks up sermon and holds it up to him.)* There's where it's gone!

RECTOR. But I started at ten o'clock.

DIANE. And just look at what you've done in less than four hours! *(She places sermon on lower end of desk, replaces paper-weight, picks up spoon and hands it to him.)* Now, see if you can swallow that! *(She indicates saucer.)*



RECTOR. (*Enthusiastically*) Can't I, though! (*Takes mouthful.*) Why, I love it! It's perfectly delicious!

DIANE. (*Picking up newspapers that were under the rug*) Really! Don't you get tired of it—having it every day?

RECTOR. Not much! I don't think I'll ever be tired of it. It's my idea of a perfect lunch. What is it that you call it?

DIANE. Poor Man's Pudding.

RECTOR. Oh, yes, Poor Man's Pudding.

DIANE. That's what it's called in the cookbook.

RECTOR. Why, I wonder?

DIANE. Because it costs so little—just rice, milk and a little sugar. No eggs, no butter, no raisins.

RECTOR. Well, nothing could suit me any better, no matter what it cost. In fact, I think all our meals are fine. . . . Can't you stop work a minute and sit down with me while I have lunch?

DIANE. (*With a look about the room, folds papers and deposits them on window seat u.c.*) Of course I can. (*She takes chair above table, brings it right of desk and sits facing RECTOR.*)

RECTOR. I didn't believe it possible for you to get along without Hannah.

DIANE. (*Smiling*) But we've had Andy here. It's just too wonderful what he knows about house-keeping. Why, last week we got the food for the three of us down to ninety-seven cents a day. How I'm going to get on without him I don't know.

RECTOR. Why should you?

DIANE. Because Mr. Swett wants him. He's offered him a hundred dollars a month and his board, and I've told Andy he must take it.

RECTOR. Well, if Andy goes, I'm going to do my share of the housework.

DIANE. Oh, no. Every moment of your time is taken up as it is.

RECTOR. That's because I take twice as much time with my sermons now.

DIANE. (*Earnestly*) But you should, Uncle. Of all your work in the parish, your sermons ought to be the most important. You said you agreed with me about that.

RECTOR. (*Folding napkin*) I didn't agree that you should become a drudge and a slave for the sake of my sermons.

DIANE. (*Taking napkin from him, folds it, puts it in ring and places it on tray*) But don't you see it isn't drudgery if I can feel I'm helping.

RECTOR. And you think my sermons are as important as all that?

DIANE. I've told you often enough what I think of them. Each one lately seems better than the one before. (*Picks up sheets from desk.*) And this last on The Greatest Thing in the World, I think it will be the very best of all.

RECTOR. Why, how do you know about it?

DIANE. I read what you wrote yesterday. (RECTOR looks up at her, delighted that she should be so interested in his work.) "Sympathy With Understanding." (*She turns to him and speaks earnestly*) I imagined the greatest thing was going to be love, but your idea is so much bigger! Love means so many things, whereas "sympathy with understanding" somehow means so much more.

RECTOR. Do you know how I found that out?

DIANE. No. (*She places sermon on lower end of table.*)

RECTOR. I learned it from you.

DIANE. Uncle!

RECTOR. Your understanding of me and my work, and your sympathetic interest with that understanding, is responsible for every word I've written there.

DIANE. Then never speak to me of drudgery and

slavery again. (*She picks up tray and starts U.L. as ANDY opens door and speaks to RECTOR.*)

ANDY. Doc. Cobb wants to see you. (*He calls off L.*) He's in here, Doc.

RECTOR. (*As DR. COBB enters U.L.*) Come in, Andrew. (*ANDY withdraws, closing door. DR. COBB enters excitedly; sees DIANE and speaks to her cordially.*)

COBB. Hello, young lady. How's the housekeeper today?

DIANE. She's been upsetting this room, but the parlor's in order.

COBB. This is all right for me. I want to talk to your divine uncle a minute.

DIANE. (*As she exits U.L.*) Then you'll not mind excusing the housekeeper. (*COBB follows her U.L., closes door and glances out the window U.C.*)

RECTOR. What's the matter, Andrew?

COBB. (*Coming D.L. and sitting in chair R. of table*) Have you seen the Middletown Spade?

RECTOR. No, I've never heard of it. What is it?

COBB. It's a scandal sheet.

RECTOR. Oh!

COBB. Printed once a week and filled with all the mean gossip they can dig up, and this week's issue has taken a crack at us!

RECTOR. (*Incredulously*) You and me?

COBB. Particularly you and your niece—and young Jamieson! And then they take a slam at the whole parish!

RECTOR. What in the world did they find to write about?

COBB. What didn't they find! It's the damndest lot of slander I ever looked at!

RECTOR. Have you a copy of the paper?

COBB. No—and I couldn't get one for love or money. Betsy Blodgett showed me one she had, but she grabbed it away again before I could half read

it, and she's running around the village with it as fast as she can go. Not two minutes after she left, my telephone rang and I was notified that there will be a special meeting of the vestry at half-past two in the Sunday School room—and I wanted to find out if you knew anything about it.

RECTOR. Nothing.

COBB. That's what I surmised. David, this is going to resolve itself into an indignation meeting, and I want you there. (RECTOR looks at COBB during a slight pause. Then speaks quietly.)

RECTOR. But they haven't notified me. Evidently, they don't want me there.

COBB. That's it exactly, and that's the very reason why you ought to be there. Come along—where's your hat? (He rises and goes U.L. quickly.)

RECTOR. I'd rather not go.

COBB. But anything that's said I want said before your face, and I want you to come back at 'em for all there is in you!

RECTOR. Quarreling is very distasteful to me, Andrew.

COBB. But it's necessary in this case.

RECTOR. Oh, no.

COBB. If you don't care on your own account, you've got your niece to consider—her reputation! (RECTOR glares at COBB, his face taking on an expression of ferocity. He rises slowly, clenches his hands, goes U.L. to COBB. Stands a moment, then speaks quietly.)

RECTOR. You mean they dared print anything in that article against Diane's reputation?

COBB. I should say they did! (The RECTOR pauses for a moment, his eyes still on COBB, then turns abruptly and opens door U.L.)

RECTOR. (In doorway) Come, Andrew. (He exits quickly and strides out front door.)

COBB. Now you're talking. (*He exits into hallway.*)

DIANE'S VOICE. (*Off left*) Are you and Uncle going out?

COBB. (*With change of tone*) Yes. On an errand. (*He hurries out front door and is heard calling as he runs past the center window*) Hold on, David! Don't forget I'm with you! (*As he exits, ANDY comes on from left behind windows, and stands looking after them curiously. DIANE comes on U.L. with broom, whisk-broom, long-handled mop, dustpan and several wash-rags. All these articles must be well-used and old. She puts the things down U.L. and calls to ANDY through the window.*)

DIANE. I can't find the pail, Andy. Do you know where it is?

ANDY. (*Picking up old wooden pail from above windows*) I was usin' it out here when I was washin' the windows. Do you want it?

DIANE. Yes, please. (*ANDY disappears L. and DIANE begins picking up remainder of papers. ANDY enters U.L. with pail half filled with water, two cloths with which he has been wiping windows hanging over the handle.*)

ANDY. (*Coming D.C. to her and taking papers from her hands*) Now you go and take a rest for a spell. I'll clean up in here. (*He carries papers up to window seat; lifts chair that has been lying on window seat and places it U.L. DIANE places small chair R.C.*)

DIANE. You won't have time if you're going to get the parlor carpet down this afternoon.

ANDY. I won't tackle that till tomorrow.

DIANE. (*Pushing easy chair into center of alcove*) You won't be here tomorrow.

ANDY. (*Coming down L.C. in surprise*) Why won't I?

DIANE. Because in the morning you're going to work for Hiram Swett.

ANDY. Didn't I tell you I don't want that job over to Swett's?

DIANE. (*Going to him R.C.*) And didn't I tell you that I wanted you to take it? We can't allow you to work here for nothing when you have a chance to earn good wages. Why, Mr. Swett has offered to pay you more than Uncle gets.

ANDY. What do I care how much old Swett'll pay me? I'd rather be here than work up to Swett's if he'd give me a million dollars a minute. What's money alongside sentiment? Your uncle's the best friend I got in the world! Why, there ain't nothin' I wouldn't do for him! I'd lay down here on the floor and die for him! (DIANE is greatly impressed.)

DIANE. Andy, you're a darling! And you've shown all the time you've been here how much you care for Uncle. I couldn't possibly have got along without you at first, but you've taught me so much I think I can now—and it's because you're so good that we can't allow you to make this sacrifice for us!

ANDY. (*Desperately*) But I tell you I'd sacrifice anything! Why, I'd lay right down here on the floor . . .

DIANE. (*Breaking in*) But we don't want you to! Now, please don't say anything more about it—only understand that you're leaving us tonight.

ANDY. But, I . . .

DIANE. Andy, you're leaving us tonight! (ANDY looks at her and realizes that nothing he can say will change her mind. He then looks down at the floor and stands uncomfortably for a moment. Then, with sudden resolve, turns and faces her.)

ANDY. I'd like to tell you somethin' if I could!

DIANE. Well, why can't you?

ANDY. 'Cause I give my word I wouldn't. But

when I give it I didn't figure on your sendin' me away. (DIANE looks at him, greatly puzzled. After a slight pause, ANDY turns away from her and continues) Well—if I leave here and go up to Swett's—it's goin' to cost me fifty dollars a month!

DIANE. (After a short pause) Andy, what on earth do you mean?

ANDY. I mean—I'm gettin' one hundred and fifty a month workin' here. (DIANE is about to question him, but he continues rapidly and earnestly) But it ain't the money! I swear it ain't the money! Money ain't nothin' to what I think of your uncle. He's the best friend I got in the world, and I'd lay right down there on the floor . . .

DIANE. Andy, how are you getting a hundred and fifty a month? Who's giving it to you?

ANDY. (Hesitatingly) Young Mr. Jamieson!

DIANE. (Loudly) Andy!

ANDY. (Soothingly) Oh, it's all right, Miss Lee. It ain't doin' no harm. He said not a soul in the world but me and him must ever know about it.

DIANE. (Greatly distressed) How could you have done this, Andy? How could you?

ANDY. Why, I thought it was the right thing to do. I wanted to work here anyhow, and if Mr. Jamieson's willin' to pay for it, why shouldn't he? His father's got most all the money there is in the world. You hadn't ought to mind it. You'd oughter be glad of it. Shows how much that young fella loves yer!

DIANE. (Turning away from him) Andy!

ANDY. Yes, he does, too! I've seen all kinds o' lovin' goin' on here since I was a kid, but I never seen anybody love nobody the way that fella loves you—never in my born days!

DIANE. Andy! We won't talk about that! (She goes right and sits in easy chair, staring front.)

ANDY. (Following her and standing just left of

*chair*) I got to talk about it, now I'm started. Just because he didn't act quite like he should one time—you got the wrong idea of him. (*DIANE turns to him quickly.*) Oh, I know all about it—and the way you've been cool to him ever since, and him tryin' every way to show you he was sorry. Why do you suppose he come up here and took charge of his aunt's farm that she left him? Hum? (*He bends toward her confidentially.*) It was to be near you! And look—look at the fine way he's been livin' ever since that night!

DIANE. Since what night?

ANDY. Since the night you druv him out for tryin' to get a little . . . well, you know . . . a little too friendly. (*He sits on small chair R.C.*) I come along just as he was goin' out that door. I seen he was lookin' queer, but I passed the time of day with him and he said he was goin' home to get a drink—so I walked along with him. And when we got to his house, he walked me right into the parlor! Then he got out a bottle, and after it was gone he begin a-talkin' about you. He said he'd made a fool out of himself and he wasn't fit to live and he asked me to take him out and shoot him in the back yard! And then he got out some more bottles to make him forget, but he couldn't. And he felt so bad about insultin' you that he got me to cryin'—and then he got to cryin'. So to cheer him up I went over to the piano and we sung some hymns together, and when I woke up the next afternoon, I was alayin' in his bed. Well, I come back into the parlor and there he was a-sleepin' in under the piano with his head on the foot-keys! And after he come to, oh, you'd oughter heard the way he talked about you. He said for the first time in his life he'd got somethin' to live for and he was goin' to see if he was man enough to live right. And then, Miss Lee, he got out all his bottles and smashed 'em! Judas priest, I nearly



died! Well, that's the whole story. (*He rises, crosses left, picks up pail and mop.*) And now if you send me away . . .

(BETSY BLODGETT, with newspaper in hand, appears at the window U.C. and looks in.)

MISS BLODGETT. Excuse me, is the rector in? (*At the sound of the voice, DIANE rises and goes center.*)

DIANE. (*With assumed composure*) How do you do, Miss Blodgett? My uncle went somewhere with Dr. Cobb.

MISS BLODGETT. Then I s'pose he's heard of it.

DIANE. Heard of what?

MISS BLODGETT. (*Showing DIANE the paper*) This!—This catastrophe!

DIANE. Something in that paper?

MISS BLODGETT. Haven't you seen it?

DIANE. No.

MISS BLODGETT. (*Starting off left hurriedly*) I'll be right in. (*She rushes into the study.*) Andy, I want to see Miss Lee alone.

ANDY. Judas priest, what's busted loose now?

MISS BLODGETT. I guess you'll find it's no time for jokin'—please leave us!

ANDY. Miss Lee don't want to be pestered with none of your notions!

DIANE. (*Crossing quickly*) You mustn't talk like that, Andy.

ANDY. Oh, I know Betsy better'n you do, but I'll go if you say so. (*He goes to door U.L.*) Only, I ain't a-goin' to Swett's. I can be drove to water, but nobody can't make me drink it. (*He exits quickly, banging the door after him.*)

DIANE. We're just cleaning this room, Miss Blodgett. (*Crosses to door U.L.*) Perhaps you'd like to come into the parlor.

MISS BLODGETT. At such a time as this, house-cleaning is a mighty small matter! (*Surprised, DIANE turns and looks at her; then goes D.L. to chair.*)

DIANE. Well, then, won't you sit down?

MISS BLODGETT. At such a time as this I don't feel like sitting down. (*DIANE turns to her, puzzled.*) I feel like running away from Dedham and never coming back! (*MISS BLODGETT crosses D.L. to her and holds out paper.*) You're sure you haven't seen the write-up in this paper?

DIANE. (*Making no attempt to read it*) Quite sure.

MISS BLODGETT. As a member of St. Mark's parish, I consider it my duty to show it to you. Look at those headlines! (*She spreads out paper; DIANE with one glance reads them and stands clenching her hands, fighting to control her sobs. MISS BLODGETT reads from paper*) "No hand-outs for this parson!" (*She lowers the paper after each line, watching the effect on DIANE.*) "Sporting son of millionaire joins fight to boost minister's salary.

"Beautiful charmer from Paris said to be reason for gilded youth's interest. Cigarettes and booze in rectory scandalize parish!" (*She holds out paper to DIANE, who stands gazing front dumbfounded.*) And that's nothing to what's in the article! (*DIANE mechanically takes the paper; looks at the headlines; goes left to chair in front of RECTOR'S desk. MISS BLODGETT follows her quickly, and takes paper from DIANE.*) You can skip all that first part—it just describes Dedham before you came. (*Finds place and puts paper in DIANE'S hands.*) But here it begins! (*Reads over DIANE'S shoulder*) "... when the serenity and tranquillity which had gone on in the parish for so many years was blown to smithereens by the arrival of the rector's niece from gay Paree—" (*She grabs paper again; DIANE sits*

*quietly, facing front, struggling not to give way.)* Then here!—"Her next step was to get the rector to demand more salary, and she formed a plan to shame the old tightwads of the vestry." *(She lowers paper and summarizes the next few paragraphs in her own words.)* And then it says that you got your uncle to refuse every donation, and it tells about your sending Hannah away and pretending to make a slave of yourself. Listen to this: *(She finds place and reads again)* "She swept, she scrubbed, she cooked, she washed; she darned her uncle's socks and damned his congregation!" *(Again lowers paper, looking through columns as she speaks)* And then it says nobody knew why until they found out that you were trying to catch Mr. Kenneth Jamieson by being Cinderella. *(MONTE JONES crosses R. to L., above center windows. BETSY BLODGETT lowers paper again.)* But it didn't work, they say, because Mr. Jamieson was too wise. Here it says—*(Reads)* "But evidently Cinderella was not aware that the young libertine was so altar-shy that his noted sire had spent sleepless nights and golden dollars to assuage the ruffled feelings of several jilted ladies."

*(DIANE rises abruptly and crosses right. MONTE JONES knocks lightly on door U.L. BETSY BLODGETT is about to cross right to DIANE when MONTE opens door U.L. and enters. DIANE stops R.C. MONTE leaves door open, places hat on table D.L. and crosses right to DIANE.)*

MONTE. Good afternoon, Miss Lee.

DIANE. How do you do, Mr. Jones?

*(KENNETH JAMIESON appears above windows from right; ANDY meets him and they stand U.C., talking. MONTE turns to BETSY BLODGETT, who has crossed L.C.)*

MONTE. Good afternoon.

MISS BLODGETT. (*Solemnly, shaking hands*) How dy do, Monte? (*ANDY enters U.L. quietly, comes down left and deposits pail.*)

ANDY. I'm ready to start a-cleanin' up in here! (*KENNETH disappears off right.*)

MISS BLODGETT. I shan't stay any longer, if that's what you mean. (*Exit quickly U.L.*)

MONTE. Could I see you for just a minute, Miss Lee? (*DIANE goes to him R.C.*)

ANDY. (*Crossing U.L. and opening door wide*) You can see her just as well in the other room, can't ya?

MONTE. (*Going U.L. to door*) Certainly!

ANDY. (*Indicating room off left*) Right in there! (*MONTE turns in doorway to DIANE.*)

DIANE. (*Going to him U.L.*) But I'm really awfully busy now.

MONTE. This will only take a minute. (*DIANE crosses to door U.L. and exits, MONTE following her off. ANDY closes the door after them; picks up mop U.L.; goes to window and waves it up and down; KENNETH comes around from off right, jumps in through centre window and goes D.R. ANDY goes to door U.L. and calls off.*)

ANDY. Can you come in here for just a minute, Miss Lee? (*He closes door quickly, picks up pail, D.L., and exits through centre window as DIANE opens door U.L. and enters, coming into the room a little way before seeing KENNETH. She stops instantly.*)

(*KENNETH is dressed in old suit, trousers stuck in high, heavy laced boots, grey flannel shirt, old Norfolk jacket and a cap.*)

KENNETH. I—I came in through the window.

DIANE. (*Crossing to him D.R.*) And you sent Andy ahead to drive Mr. Jones away.

KENNETH. I'm sorry. I had to see you. I've heard they've called a special meeting of the church vestry.

DIANE. When?

KENNETH. Now. I thought they'd be here. Perhaps they're over at the church. I'll find out. (*He crosses U.L. quickly.*)

DIANE. (*Turning*) What for?

KENNETH. To tell them a thing or two.

DIANE. But that will only make a bad matter worse.

KENNETH. (*Coming back to her*) Why, do you know what the meeting is about?

DIANE. I presume it's to punish my uncle for what I've been doing.

KENNETH. You mean for what's in that rotten newspaper?

DIANE. Yes.

KENNETH. How they ever dared to write that stuff about you . . .

DIANE. It's curious they left Andy out of it.

KENNETH. Andy?

DIANE. I mean your paying him to work here.

KENNETH. Oh, how did you know that?

DIANE. I've only just found it out—and he's leaving us tonight.

KENNETH. (*Disappointedly*) Oh, why?

DIANE. (*Exasperated*) Because my uncle and I don't want to accept charity.

KENNETH. But I didn't think you'd know anything about it. Good Lord, you don't imagine that church gang has found it out! (*He turns suddenly, goes U.L. and opens door.*) I'm going over and talk to them.

DIANE. But nothing you can say will do any good.

KENNETH. (*Stops at door; shuts it and comes down to her*) It would—if you'd help.

DIANE. What can I do?

KENNETH. Marry me. (*DIANE looks at him intensely for a moment, pauses, fighting to control her sobs, then laughs hysterically, suddenly breaking into sobs as she turns and sinks into chair D.R.*)

KENNETH. (*Crossing to her*) Please, please don't do that! I wouldn't hurt your feelings for the world!

DIANE. I can see you rushing into the meeting and saying, "It's all right. I've decided to marry the girl!"

KENNETH. What do you suppose I'd care if I could have you? All the time I was reading the muck in that paper, I couldn't help wishing it were true—(*DIANE turns and looks up at him in surprise*) . . . that you were trying to capture me. I'd be the easiest capture you ever heard of. Why, I've wanted to marry you—ever since that night—when I made such a fool of myself. I'll never forget what you said to me. I wouldn't have felt half as mean if you'd had me kicked out of the house. And I've wanted to apologize ever since—but I haven't known how. Whenever I'm with you I seem to be tongue-tied. The only time I can really talk to you is when I'm alone. I thought perhaps you might change your mind about me if I tried a new way of living. That's why I've been working on my farm—sticking on the wagon—and going to church! Half the time I don't believe it's me! Oh, I'm telling you this to try to show you how much you mean to me and how it makes me feel to think I've brought all this trouble to you.

DIANE. (*Rising slowly and facing him*) Mr. Jamieson, are you sure you remember what I said to you that night?

KENNETH. (*Turning away from her*) Am I sure! Do you want me to repeat it?

DIANE. No, I want to take it back—I was mistaken. (KENNETH *turns quickly and takes her hands.*)

KENNETH. Diane! (*Door U.L. is opened by MONTE, who stands in doorway a moment gazing at them.*)

MONTE. (*Stiffly*) Oh, I'm sorry!

KENNETH. Hello, Jones'y.

MONTE. (*Ignoring KENNETH, crosses D.R. to DIANE*) I thought Andy Beardsley was in here.

KENNETH. He's outside somewhere. (*He crosses to DIANE and takes her hand.*) Good-bye. I'm going over to that meeting. I'll come back and let you know what happens. (*He turns below MONTE, puts his hand on MONTE's shoulder and turns him U.L.*) I'll find Andy for you.

MONTE. (*Shaking off KENNETH's hand*) I don't want to find him.

KENNETH. (*Amused*) Oh!

MONTE. (*Outraged*) I called to see Miss Lee and Andy asked me to go into the other room—and now I know why!

KENNETH. Well, Sonny, it's a good idea to know why you do things.

MONTE. (*Furiously*) I know what I'm doing—and I know what you're doing!

KENNETH. Good! Then you'll understand what a hurry I'm in and excuse my running away!

MONTE. I'll be glad to have you.

KENNETH. (*Turning in doorway U.L.*) All right—anything to oblige. Only don't forget—I'm coming back! (*With a glance at DIANE, he exits.*)

DIANE. (*Crossing center to MONTE*) I'm sorry to have kept you waiting, Mr. Jones.

MONTE. Well, it didn't look that way to me! I

came to tell you that I didn't believe what was in that newspaper,—but now I'm not so sure!

DIANE. (*Crossing quickly U.R.*) Indeed!

MONTE. (*Following her U.C.*) Well, what can you expect me to think after being put in that room so you could see him?

DIANE. I didn't put you there!

MONTE. Just the same, it looks like a trick to me. And I tell you one thing—you want to keep away from that fellow if you care about your reputation. Girls that fall for him pretty nearly always end up by suing him for something. That's the kind he is! I—I guess—you know I've cared a lot about you—and I do now—and if you'll cut out Kenneth Jamieson, I'll go around and tell everybody that newspaper story was a lie! And I'll have my mother tell father that he's got to get your uncle's salary raised! Why, Miss Lee, I'll—— (*He happens to look off right through center windows.*) Gosh, here comes Mother and Gladys! (*He rushes U.L. and tries desperately to keep out of sight. MRS. JONES and GLADYS cross above windows right to left.*) Can't we go somewhere?

DIANE. Are you afraid to have them see you here?

MONTE. (*Going center*) Well, there's no use having a row. I'll come back when they've gone! (*He hurriedly begins climbing out of window U.C.*)

GLADYS. (*Appearing above windows from left*) Why, hello, Monte! What are you trying to do? (*MONTE stops, one foot through the window, and GLADYS stands laughing at him. The door U.L. is opened suddenly by MRS. JONES.*)

MRS. JONES. (*Coming into the study*) Montague!

MONTE. (*Turns quickly, gets down slowly and comes D.C. into room*) Yes, ma'am?



MRS. JONES. I wish to speak to you. (*To DIANE*) Miss Lee, is the rector at home?

DIANE. (*Coming D.R.*) He went out with Dr. Cobb. Won't you come into the parlor? (*She crosses U.L.*)

MRS. JONES. I have something to say to my son, if you'll excuse me.

DIANE. Certainly. Uncle may have come back—I'll see. (*She exits U.L., closing door. GLADYS jumps up and sits on window-sill of center window.*)

MRS. JONES. (*Turning to MONTE*) Monte, I want you to tell me why you are here.

MONTE. Well,—I—I——

GLADYS. (*Tauntingly*) Because he's in love with Cinderella.

MRS. JONES. Be quiet, Gladys. This is nothing to joke about. Monte, do you realize the risk you are running in being here in the company of this young woman?

MONTE. What risk?

MRS. JONES. The risk of bringing a scandal into our family with the next issue of that newspaper.

MONTE. What can they say about me?

MRS. JONES. You read what they printed about Mr. Jamieson.

MONTE. Yes, and it served him right. But I'm not his kind.

MRS. JONES. (*Proudly*) Indeed you are his kind—the son of a respectable and—er—prominent family. You'd be just the one to make good material for another story. I'm tremendously sorry for Kenneth Jamieson. I felt perfectly sure that he would get himself into trouble. That girl has been pretending to make a martyr of herself just to pull the wool over his eyes.

MONTE. (*Hotly*) I don't believe it. (*He crosses D.R.*)

GLADYS. Neither do I.

MRS. JONES. Neither did poor Kenneth Jamieson. My reason for calling on Kenneth the other day was to warn him of the very thing that's now come out in print.

MONTE. If you went up there to warn him, what made you take Gladys with you?

MRS. JONES. That had nothing to do with it.

MONTE. I thought it was so she could invite him to tea. (*He glances at GLADYS.*) And then he didn't show up! (*He crosses D.L.*)

MRS. JONES. Well, when he didn't come, I wrote to his father.

GLADYS. (*Interestedly*) Did you, Mother? What did you say?

MRS. JONES. (*Turning U.C. to GLADYS*) I wrote him frankly that I feared his son was becoming dangerously involved with a young person from Paris.

GLADYS. But now he'll send for Kenneth to come home.

MRS. JONES. (*Coming D.L. and watching MONTE keenly*) I think not—if I can assure him that the young woman is leaving Dedham. (*MONTE turns to her quickly.*)

GLADYS. Oh, is she?

MRS. JONES. I think she will!

MONTE. But—but where is she going?

MRS. JONES. Where she goes, Monte, will not concern you. And now I want you to take your sister home. (*GLADYS gets down above window.*)

MONTE. What for?

MRS. JONES. (*Impatiently*) Because I wish you to!

MONTE. (*Hesitates; then starts U.L.*) Well, I'll just say good-bye to Miss Lee.

MRS. JONES. (*Following him quickly, sends him back into room*) You'll do nothing of the sort. (*Opens door U.L. and calls off*) Miss Lee! (*She comes back into room.*)

MONTE. But, Mother . . .

MRS. JONES. Not a word.

DIANE. (*Coming to door U.L. from hall*) My uncle hasn't come back yet.

MRS. JONES. Then may I have a word with you?

DIANE. (*Going to chair D.L.*) Certainly, Mrs. Jones.

MRS. JONES. You may go, Monte. (*MONTE stands undecided a moment, looking from MRS. JONES to DIANE; then goes boldly to DIANE and offers hand.*)

MONTE. Good-bye, Miss Lee. (*He goes to table, gets hat, opens door and turns to DIANE.*) And I don't believe that story. (*He goes quickly out U.L. and through front door before DIANE has a chance to speak.*)

GLADYS. And Miss Lee—I don't believe it either. (*MONTE appears behind window from left and goes to GLADYS.*)

MONTE. I don't see why I've got to take you home.

GLADYS. (*Meaningly*) I do! (*They go off together above window left to right.*)

MRS. JONES. (*After watching the children disappear, turns slowly and comes down left to DIANE.*) This unfortunate newspaper notoriety has created great feeling in our village, Miss Lee.

DIANE. I'm more than sorry.

MRS. JONES. Undoubtedly you are. But simply being sorry will not go far toward helping the situation.

DIANE. Is there anything I can do that will help it?

MRS. JONES. Yes, one thing—if you will allow me to suggest. You ought to leave Dedham. That is the only way to save your uncle from a great deal of trouble and humiliation.

DIANE. I can't see that my running away will save him humiliation.

MRS. JONES. Then evidently you are not aware of the state of mind of his parish. I dislike saying it, but I am certain that if you stay on here your uncle will lose his church.

DIANE. (*After a slight pause*) Well—there are other churches!

MRS. JONES. (*A trifle impatiently*) But under the circumstances, his chance of getting another berth would be very remote.

DIANE. I don't believe it!

MRS. JONES. Perhaps, then, you don't believe that you're responsible for getting your uncle into this trouble!

DIANE. I believe my uncle is as unappreciated by his congregation as he's underpaid . . .

MRS. JONES. Really, Miss Lee! I . . .

DIANE. (*Continuing furiously*) And it's malicious and lying gossip in your village that's responsible for this cowardly attack!

MRS. JONES. (*Taking a step toward DIANE*) Well, let me tell you . . .

DIANE. I'm very busy with the housecleaning, Mrs. Jones. (*She goes U.L. quickly and opens door.*) I must ask you to excuse me! (*MRS. JONES looks at her in amazement, then turns U.L. to her angrily. DIANE calling off left—*) Andy! Andy! (*MRS. JONES drops back as ANDY walks in quickly, stepping to the left of doorway as he sees MRS. JONES. MRS. JONES, after a moment's pause, goes out U.L., through front door and is seen crossing above windows from left to right, in great indignation. DIANE turns slowly, gets broom from U.L. and comes D.C.*) Will you help me in here, Andy?

ANDY. Sure! What's up?

DIANE. (*About to sweep*) We should sweep first, shouldn't we?

ANDY. (*Comes D.C. to her and tries to take broom from her*) Here, let me have it! (*DIANE suddenly lets go the broom, throws her arms around ANDY's neck, puts her head against his shoulder, and sobs. ANDY stands rigidly, gazing at her in surprise.*)

DIANE. (*Sobbing*) Oh, Andy, Andy, Andy!

ANDY. Why, what's happened? Is it somethin' that old critter's been sayin' to you?

DIANE. (*Controlling her sobs, moves a little away from him*) Uncle's going to be driven out of his church, Andy.

ANDY. He's what?

DIANE. He's going to be dismissed—thrown out—unless I go away.

ANDY. (*Indignantly*) Is that what that old sea-cow told you?

DIANE. Yes.

ANDY. Well, it's the dumbdest nonsense I ever heard of.

DIANE. No, it's true, Andy. The vestry is having a meeting to vote on it now.

ANDY. They can have meetin's till Doomsday for all I care. You just let Davie Lee start a-talkin' to 'em!

DIANE. But I don't think Uncle knows anything about it.

ANDY. Why, he must be over there with 'em. Because Doc Cobb come to get him, and Doc's one of the vestrymen.

DIANE. So he is! Oh, Andy, will you go over and find out if Uncle is there? (*She takes broom from him.*)

ANDY. Sure I will! (*He starts U.L., turns and comes back to DIANE.*) If you won't start a-cryin' and a-takin' on while I'm gone!

DIANE. I'll start cleaning the room—but hurry, Andy, won't you?

ANDY. Yes, and I'll bring back some news. (*He*

*hurries out U.L. to hallway, takes off carpet apron; grabs hat and coat from rack and rushes out front door. As he passes the windows U.C., he stops, putting on his hat and coat as he talks.)* Say, I'd like to see any one of 'em vote to get rid of David Lee. Judas priest! their own mothers wouldn't know 'em when I got through with 'em! *(He exits off left. DIANE looks after him a moment, her hands clenching the broom; struggles not to give way again; then with sudden resolve goes quickly left, puts broom on settee, pushes easy chair to U.R. corner of alcove.)*

*(CORNELIUS JAMIESON is seen crossing R. to L. above windows. As DIANE picks up broom and is about to sweep, JAMIESON comes into room through door U.L. CORNELIUS JAMIESON is between fifty and sixty; a great man of affairs; although he is gruff and blunt, his manners are instinctively good; though he is stubborn, he is never really unreasonable. He is dressed in light travelling suit, panama hat and thin gloves. He was born in Dedham; a boyhood chum of the RECTOR; now one of the richest men in America.)*

JAMIESON. Young woman! *(At the sound of the voice, DIANE turns and looks at him.)* Is Mr. Kenneth Jamieson here?

DIANE. No.

JAMIESON. They told me at the farm that this was where I'd find him.

DIANE. Are you a reporter?

JAMIESON. *(Puzzled)* I'm his father.

DIANE. *(Startled)* Oh! *(She crosses center to him.)* I think you can find him at the church.

JAMIESON. Find him at church!

DIANE. He went over there a few minutes ago.

JAMIESON. Oh! With that French girl?

DIANE. No.

JAMIESON. Well, is she here?

DIANE. I suppose you mean—me. (JAMIESON looks her over in surprise.)

JAMIESON. I mean Diane Lee.

DIANE. That is my name.

JAMIESON. Indeed! (He crosses U.L. and shuts door.) Well, I'd like to have a word with you, if you can spare the time.

DIANE. (Indicating chair down left) Won't you sit down?

JAMIESON. Thank you. (He goes to chair. She comes down on his right and stands facing him.) Will you put that broom away and sit down here? What I've got to say won't take long. (After a moment's pause, DIANE goes U.L., leans broom against the wall, brings chair U.L. down to left center and sits.) I've come from New York on purpose to have a talk with you.

DIANE. I suppose you've seen the Middletown Spade?

JAMIESON. (Puzzled) The Middletown Spade?

DIANE. Yes.

JAMIESON. No, I haven't—or the shovel, or the pick-axe, or the crow-bar.

DIANE. You haven't seen that story?

JAMIESON. I haven't seen any story.

DIANE. Then I don't understand why you've come.

JAMIESON. I've come to find out what's going on between you and Kenneth.

DIANE. There's nothing going on between us that I think you would object to.

JAMIESON. I object to anything going on between you, no matter what it is! (DIANE rises indignant-ly.) Now, don't get angry! I'm not saying anything against you. I don't know you from Adam—

or from Eve, either—but I do know Kenneth! (*He rises and faces her.*) And if you're running around with him, or he's running around with you—I want it stopped. Understand?

DIANE. I don't understand why you should speak to me this way. If you object to anything your son is doing, I should think you'd tell him about it.

JAMIESON. Oh, I'm going to tell him about it, but I think it's just as well for you to know it, too! I want you to keep away from each other—because if you're the wrong kind of a girl, it's going to land me in court again, and if you're the right kind of a girl—the less you have to do with that fellow the better for you! (*He turns from her and walks D.L.*)

DIANE. (*Quietly*) Is that all you wish to say?

JAMIESON. (*Turning slowly back to her*) That depends on how well you know Kenneth. Are you aware that he has been having affairs with women ever since he went away to school? And that his last escapade, before he came up here, has cost me over twenty thousand dollars so far, and I'm not through with it yet?

DIANE. Yes.

JAMIESON. (*Surprised*) Oh, you do!

DIANE. Yes, he's told me.

JAMIESON. Well, if he's told you, that's all I've got to say to you. (*He picks up hat and goes to door U.L. Stops suddenly and looks back at her.*) Did you say I'll find him at church?

DIANE. He said he was going there and that he'd come back here afterwards.

JAMIESON. (*Throwing hat on table, comes back to chair D.L. and sits*) Then I'll wait for him here, if you'll allow it. (*DIANE turns abruptly and goes to door U.R.*) Go ahead with your work. Don't mind me.

DIANE. But I do mind you, Mr. Jamieson! (*She exits U.R., closing the door smartly.*)



(JAMIESON stares at the door, then sits thinking a moment, impatiently takes out watch and looks at it. Suddenly rises, goes to door U.R. quickly, puts hand on knob; then turns abruptly U.C. and looks out of window; whirls around and sits in D.L. chair, facing front. He crosses his legs and attempts to wait patiently; then rests his left arm on desk and drums on desk with fingers; accidentally touches sheets under the paper-weight and he glances at them absently. Something that he reads attracts his attention and he leans forward and continues reading. Lifts paper-weight and finishes sentences; turns away with slight exclamation.)

JAMIESON. Hmm! (Returns to sermon and once more reads sentences; then leans back in chair and nods.) By God, that's right! (He picks up the sheets, settles back in chair and gives himself up to reading the sermon, becoming more and more interested.)

(KENNETH appears behind window going R. to L. He moves slowly, head down, hands in pockets, as if he dreaded telling DIANE what was happening at the meeting. Opens door U.L. and enters, searching the room for DIANE. He sees the back of his father's head and comes quietly D.C., shutting door U.L. Suddenly thinks what a help his father can be in the present emergency and greets him enthusiastically.)

KENNETH. (D.C.) Dad! (JAMIESON puts down sermon, startled. Looks up, sees KENNETH and glares at him. Then notices KENNETH's appearance and his anger gives way somewhat to an expression of curiosity.)

JAMIESON. Where did you get that rig?

KENNETH. (*Looking down at his clothes and smiling*) These are my working clothes.

JAMIESON. (*Drily*) You don't say! Up to now your working clothes have always been evening dress.

KENNETH. (*Earnestly*) Father, I was never so glad to see you in my life.

JAMIESON. (*Turning away from him wearily*) It must be worse than I thought it was.

KENNETH. How in the world did you . . . Oh, I know! You've seen the Middleton *Spade*!

JAMIESON. (*Turning to him quickly*) What the hell is the Middleton *Spade*? Everybody I meet around here is talking about a Middletown *Spade*.

KENNETH. It's a rotten scandal sheet and it's just come out with the meanest story you ever read in your life.

JAMIESON. It has, eh? What about?

KENNETH. About the rector's niece, Miss Lee.

JAMIESON. (*With sudden understanding*) Oh! And you're in it, too, I suppose?

KENNETH. (*After a moment's hesitation*) Yes, sir.

JAMIESON. Gad, you're at it again!

KENNETH. No, I'm not! It's all a confounded lie! But that's not what I'm worried about nor why I'm so glad to see you.

JAMIESON. Well, what is?

KENNETH. It's the rector's salary.

JAMIESON. The what?

KENNETH. (*Patiently*) Mr. Lee's salary. Why, Father, they only pay him eight hundred dollars a year!

JAMIESON. Is that so! My God, that's terrible! I don't see how you've been able to stand it! If you ever hear what the postmaster gets, it'll send you to the hospital.

KENNETH. You wouldn't think it was so funny if you knew about it.

JAMIESON. The only funny thing is your knowing about it. What's struck you, anyway?

KENNETH. Nothing but what would strike anybody, if they had a grain of sense. He's no reformer, Dad, he's a real man! And he preaches the finest sermons you ever listened to!

JAMIESON. (*Rising slowly*) How do you know?

KENNETH. Because I go and hear them.

JAMIESON. (*Incredulously*) You go to church?

KENNETH. Yes, I do—every Sunday, and I'm not ashamed of it!

JAMIESON. You go to church—and you're not ashamed of it! (*He looks at KENNETH as if he couldn't believe it; then abruptly turns and walks up-stage. Turns suddenly and comes D.L. to KENNETH.*) What about this minister's niece? Are you getting religion on her account?

KENNETH. (*Quietly*) Yes.

JAMIESON. This is a novelty! Well, you can go as far as you like with religion, but you'll have to cut her out!

KENNETH. You don't know what you're talking about!

JAMIESON. You're welcome to your own opinion about that, but you'll find I mean it. I was fool enough to think that you'd taken an interest in your aunt's farm; all that you wrote about planting tobacco half convinced me. I knew it was a far cry from the way you'd been living, but your grandfather was crazy about farming and I didn't know but there was a streak of him in you somewhere that I'd never noticed. (*He turns down-stage, below the RECTOR's desk.*) Why I didn't have sense enough to know there was a petticoat in it, I can't understand!

KENNETH. But I've never known such a girl as Miss Lee, Father.

JAMIESON. You haven't, eh? (*He turns back to him.*) Well, you've known quite enough varieties to please me. Now, there's no use talking about it. I want you to quit carrying on with this girl, no matter how different she is, or how bad she is, or how good she is—you let her alone!

KENNETH. But, Father . . .

JAMIESON. No "buts" about it! You lay off the romance game! At least until I get your last one paid for.

KENNETH. (*With sudden thought*) If I keep away from Miss Lee, will you help me with this row over the minister's salary?

JAMIESON. The minister's salary! (*He turns and crosses right below KENNETH.*) So help me, Bob, I think you've gone crazy!

KENNETH. I've gone crazy mad! And you would, too, if you knew how they're treating him! (*He crosses right to JAMIESON*) Why, Dad, they're trying to fire him out!

JAMIESON. What's his salary got to do with it?

KENNETH. That's what started it. He asked for more and Miss Lee has been trying to help him get it.

JAMIESON. And then you took a hand, eh? No wonder they want to fire him! (*He turns away from KENNETH.*)

KENNETH. (*Impatiently*) Oh, Father, try to have a little sense! (*JAMIESON turns on him quickly, but KENNETH, bent on convincing him, continues earnestly*) How can a minister have the respect of his people if he's an object of charity? How can he tell you how you ought to live while you're pitying him for the way he has to live?

JAMIESON. (*Sarcastically*) Well, well, well!

KENNETH. I should think you'd see it—and you would if anybody else told you about it. I wish I had money enough! I'd prove it to you.

JAMIESON. Prove what?

KENNETH. That ministers have the greatest chance of anybody to do good—and it's all killed by paying them starvation wages!

JAMIESON. (*Sarcastically*) What do you think a minister ought to get?

KENNETH. What do you pay Mr. Avery?

JAMIESON. (*Exploding*) Avery? What do I pay Avery? Do you know what Avery does? Do you know I can go away for six months and know that everything is taken care of as well as if I was there on the spot? Do you know that Avery knows more about my affairs than I know myself? What do I pay Avery? I pay Avery fifty thousand dollars a year. That's what I pay Avery! (*He turns right from KENNETH; suddenly whirls around and finishes*) And I'd make it a hundred thousand before I'd lose him! What the hell has what I pay Avery got to do with it?

KENNETH. Because I think Mr. Lee ought to get just as much. (*JAMIESON looks pityingly at him, turns and goes up-stage. KENNETH follows him.*) Oh, I don't mean he could—or that he wants anything like that. But, Dad, I mean a man who has the job of looking after the welfare of a whole parish is worth as much as a man who only looks after one person—even if the person is as great as you are. (*RECTOR passes above window, R. to L.*)

JAMIESON. You need a doctor. Come along over to the farm. (*He starts U.L.*)

KENNETH. (*Crossing right*) A doctor isn't what I need.

JAMIESON. (*Stopping center and turning to him*) Well, a brain specialist!

KENNETH. I'm not going home until this fight is over.

JAMIESON. (*Exasperated*) Now, see here——

(RECTOR enters U.L. KENNETH catches sight of him. JAMIESON looks at KENNETH, turns slowly and sees RECTOR. RECTOR stops inside doorway and looks with surprise at JAMIESON. There is a pause in which KENNETH looks from one to the other.)

RECTOR. Cornelius Jamieson!

JAMIESON. (*Meeting him centre*) Why, David, how are you?

RECTOR. I'm very glad to see you, Cornelius. I'd given up the idea of your ever coming home.

JAMIESON. So had I.

RECTOR. (*Crossing D.R. to KENNETH*) Your father was younger than you are, Kenneth, the last time I saw him.

KENNETH. What happened after I left the meeting?

RECTOR. (*His troubles coming back to him*) Nothing very encouraging. I'm sure that what you said had great effect. (JAMIESON looks at KENNETH, puzzled. Comes D.L.) And we were making headway until Mrs. Jones came.

KENNETH. Yes, that's why I left. I wanted to find out what Diane had said to her.

RECTOR. I'm more concerned with what she said to Diane. None of the parish must talk unkindly to her—I won't allow it.

KENNETH. That's right! But what was the finish—I mean, what did they decide on?

RECTOR. I didn't wait to hear. I told them that under no circumstances would I consider my niece's leaving and that none of them must dare mention that damnable article to her. Aside from that, they might do whatever they pleased.

KENNETH. (*Crossing left to JAMIESON*) Father, you help us out with this, won't you?

JAMIESON. I don't know anything about it. But

if you've started a row around here, I should think you'd want to finish it. (RECTOR *looks at JAMIESON with puzzled expression.*)

KENNETH. All right, I will—if you'll let me alone! (*He runs off U.L., slamming door after him, and crosses L. to R. above windows. RECTOR watches him off, starts U.C., then turns slowly to JAMIESON.*)

RECTOR. I realize why you are here now, Cornelius. It's because of that article.

JAMIESON. (*Bluntly*) No. It's because I got a letter from one of your church women about Kenneth and your niece.

RECTOR. How can people want to stir up trouble—how can they?

JAMIESON. (*A little irritated*) Well, I admit I didn't find quite what I expected.

RECTOR. What did you expect?

JAMIESON. (*Glaring at him*) Well, if you'd had Kenneth for a son, you'd know.

RECTOR. (*With feeling*) If that boy hasn't been what he should be, Cornelius, I'm perfectly certain that it's your fault. (JAMIESON *looks at the RECTOR with surprise, showing he is not in the habit of being spoken to sharply.*)

JAMIESON. (*Speaking quietly after he has regained his composure*) How do you make that out?

RECTOR. Because he's a splendid fellow—brimming over with good qualities—and I believe you've neglected him. You're like so many fathers who haven't time for their sons and then blame their sons for it.

JAMIESON. (*Restraining his anger*) I'd give that idea more consideration if you were in a position to know what you're talking about.

RECTOR. I do know what I'm talking about.

JAMIESON. Indeed! Has Kenneth told you I've neglected him?

RECTOR. If you knew him as well as I do, you

## THANK YOU

wouldn't ask such a question. He'd never say anything against you, nor let anyone else.

JAMIESON. Really! Then what makes you think I neglect him?

RECTOR. Your coming up here today.

JAMIESON. Does my coming to see him show neglect?

RECTOR. It does indeed, when you come in reply to the letter of some stranger. Your boy has been here for three months, working on Sophia's farm. He had never done a real day's work before in his life and didn't know any more about farming than that desk! But he wanted to make something of himself—and he's out in the fields every day with his men, doing as much as any of them! Your only son—trying his level best to make a man of himself, and you don't take enough interest in him to even find it out! If you'd kept watch of him and known what a square, straight life he's been leading, when you got that letter you'd have torn it to pieces, thrown it in the waste basket—instead of rushing up here to worry Kenneth with it! (JAMIESON *never moves or takes his eyes from the RECTOR during the above speech. Now turns and goes slowly U.C. Stands a moment looking out of window.*)

JAMIESON. (*Speaking quietly, after a pause*) He—he does look well, for a fact! (*He turns and comes down R.C.*) David, when I was a boy, I—I thought you were a pretty nice fellow—and I don't believe you ever got over it.

RECTOR. (*Ignoring the compliment*) I'm not so sure. I've felt today what I never thought I could feel—anger, real, burning anger—that makes a man see red! (*His face becomes drawn and his eyes flash.*) When your friends—your real friends—abuse and slander someone you love . . . (*He clenches his fists in rage. His eyes take in the sermon on his desk. Forgetting JAMIESON's presence,*



*he goes to desk, picks up sermon and is about to tear it up.)*

JAMIESON. *(Going quickly to him)* Here, what are you doing?

RECTOR. It's a sermon—but I'm going to write another, if they'll let me preach it.

JAMIESON. *(Taking sermon from his hands)* Well, don't tear up that one—I want to read it! I was looking at it before you came in. *(RECTOR stands looking front, trying to calm himself. JAMIESON puts sermon on upper end of table, comes down to RECTOR and lays his hand on the RECTOR's shoulder.)* You're not used to getting mad, are you, David?

RECTOR. *(In very low tone)* No.

JAMIESON. I am. Get mad all the time. And I can tell you something about it. *(He turns from the RECTOR and walks center thoughtfully.)* No matter how mad you get—don't lose your temper! What's this story about that raised such a rumpus?

RECTOR. *(Feeling in his pockets)* The vestry presented me with a copy of the paper. *(He takes out paper and gives it to JAMIESON. The vestrymen are seen passing behind windows, from right to left, KENNETH at their head.)*

JAMIESON. Who are those fellows?

RECTOR. *(Looking u.c.)* My vestrymen.

JAMIESON. "Onward, Christian Soldiers."

*(KENNETH opens door u.l., enters and closes door quietly. He comes down to RECTOR.)*

KENNETH. I've got the vestry over here. They're waiting in the other room.

RECTOR. Do they want me?

KENNETH. They'd just taken a vote when I got there, and I dared them to come down here and face

you with it, and after Dr. Cobb told them what he thought about them, they agreed to come.

RECTOR. I think I'd rather not see them.

KENNETH. I wish you would. The doctor has something more to tell them and so have I. Perhaps we can change their minds yet.

JAMIESON. What was their decision?

KENNETH. To get another minister. (*To RECTOR*) But it seems there's something in your contract that prevents them from discharging you, so they've voted to reduce your salary in order to force you to resign.

RECTOR. I want to resign, Kenneth.

KENNETH. But anyway, let's try to get that vote withdrawn first.

RECTOR. (*Listlessly*) Very well, I'll go in if you want me to. (*He goes to door U.L.*)

KENNETH. Will you come in, Father?

JAMIESON. I've no right in a vestry meeting.

KENNETH. This isn't a meeting. They've called here to—to pass sentence, and I'd like to have you hear it.

JAMIESON. (*Turning easy chair toward fireplace and sitting*) Then bring them in here. (*KENNETH watches until he realizes that his father intends to keep out of sight.*)

KENNETH. I see! Will you go over to your desk, Mr. Lee? (*RECTOR crosses to left of desk and stands in front of his chair. KENNETH crosses to door U.L., picking up small chair L.C., and placing it U.L. Opens door and speaks off.*) The rector will see you in here, gentlemen. (*JAMIESON deliberately unfolds paper and begins reading. KENNETH crosses right and stands with his back to easy chair with the idea of further concealing his father from view.*)

(*NORTON appears in doorway U.L., closely followed by other members of vestry. His gaze travels*

*about room until he secs RECTOR D.L., then describes a half-circle into the room, his eyes on the RECTOR. The vestrymen follow into center of room. JONES pauses a moment in doorway, then comes down to right of RECTOR'S desk, draws armchair a little up-stage and sits, facing front. COBB enters last, angrily, closes door and stands near it. After a pause, JONES speaks without rising.)*

JONES. After you left the meeting, Mr. Lee, a conclusion was reached regarding your salary. At the suggestion of young Mr. Jamieson, it was agreed that we should notify you of our decision in person. *(Slight pause.)* Mr. Clerk! *(NORTON takes a step toward JONES.)* Will you read what was voted?

NORTON. *(Going left to desk and looking over minute book hastily)* Where do you want I should begin?

COBB. At the beginning.

NORTON. *(Standing right of the rector's desk, just below JONES, reads)* "The vestry of St. Mark's Church, meetin' in extraordinary session at half-past two o'clock, two-thirty P.M., at the . . ."

JONES. No, no, no, Mr. Clerk. It's only necessary to read the motion.

NORTON. *(Turning over pages rapidly)* Well, that's what I ca'culated, but Doc Cobb says begin at the beginning, so thinks I . . .

JONES. Kindly read the motion.

NORTON. I'm a-lookin' fer it. It's right here at the end somewhere. Oh, here 'tis! *(Reads)* "Warden Jones moved that the salary of the rector be reduced to five hundred dollars per annum." *(He looks up at the vestrymen.)* That's all there is of it. *(Turns page and reads again)* "Motion seconded by Vestryman C. L. Hasbrouck and carried

by vote. (*A long, embarrassed pause; all watch the RECTOR, who stands motionless with his head up.*)

JONES. (*Rising*) I think that's all there is to be said at this time.

COBB. I don't. (*He comes D.C.*) I want to tell Mr. Lee that I am opposed to this decision and that I consider it cruel and unjust to him and to his niece. (*He goes left to desk.*) You understand, of course, David, that their object is to make you give up your church, and I hope they won't have the satisfaction of throwing you out. If you'll accept this reduction, I'll make it my business to see that you get five hundred dollars besides what the church pays you! (*The vestrymen turn to each other in surprise.*)

RECTOR. (*Slowly*) I'm very grateful to you for your offer, Andrew, but I cannot accept it. The vote to reduce my salary was quite unnecessary. Any indication that my services were no longer desired would bring forth my immediate resignation—and I offer that resignation now. (*He sits slowly and rests his head on his hand, covering his eyes.*)

JONES. It is with great regret, Rector, that we—

KENNETH. (*Crossing center quickly*) Mr. Jones, I want to say a word before Mr. Lee's resignation is accepted. I've told you once before that I feel responsible for the newspaper story that has brought about this trouble, and if you gentlemen will reconsider and vote down Mr. Jones's motion, I will undertake to make the Middletown *Spade* retract its statements and apologize for them.

JONES. Mr. Jamieson, you force me to tell you that the vestry resents any further interference on your part. We have already listened to your unflattering comments about us with considerable patience. This embarrassing publicity is not the only thing which has led to our taking action. There are—er—

other elements which have caused friction and which must be eliminated.

KENNETH. What elements?

JONES. I think you know who I mean.

KENNETH. (*Threateningly*) If you are referring to Miss Lee, I advise you to stop talking.

JONES. (*With his hands before him, takes a step backward*) You can't frighten me, Mr. Jamieson. I'm telling you what your father would tell you if he had heard of this affair.

JAMIESON. (*Suddenly rising and wheeling around toward center*) How the hell do you know what I'd tell him? (*At the sound of JAMIESON'S voice, the vestrymen turn and stand greatly surprised at the sight of JAMIESON. There is a moment's silence, and then a low murmur is heard from the members of the vestry.*)

COBB. (*Louder than the others*) Holy mackerel, it's Cornelius Jamieson!

NORTON. Why, it's Mr. Jamieson him-  
self!

HIGGINBOTHAM. Yes, that's him!

SWETT. Where'd he come from?

HASBROUCK. I've never met him.

JAMIESON. (*Shaking hands with COBB, who has crossed right to him*) Hello, Andrew.

COBB. Cornelius, how are you? You know Hi Swett?

JAMIESON. Why, yes. (*He shakes hands with SWETT.*)

SWETT. How do you do, sir?

COBB. And this is Abner Norton. (JAMIESON *nods.*)

NORTON. As Clerk of the Vestry, Mr. Jamieson, I want to say that— (COBB *swings JAMIESON around to HASBROUCK.*)

COBB. Judge Hasbrouck.

} Spoken  
together

HASBROUCK. I'm honored to meet you, Mr. Jamieson.

JAMIESON. (*Shaking hands*) How do you do, Judge?

COBB. And Mr. Higginbotham.

HIGGINBOTHAM. (*Coming down and shaking hands*) Glad to know you, sir. (*COBB is about to introduce JONES, when JAMIESON speaks as he is shaking hands with HIGGINBOTHAM. The vestrymen, with the exception of JONES, crowd around him.*)

JAMIESON. I didn't intend to break into your discussion like this, but I heard some one telling my son what I'd say, and I inquired how he knew.

JONES. (*Coming down on JAMIESON's left*) I made that remark, Mr. Jamieson. (*JAMIESON turns to him slowly.*) I am Mr. Morton Jones. My son is going through about the same experience as yours, and I thought I could understand what your feeling would be.

JAMIESON. (*Holding up newspaper*) You mean about this fool thing?

JONES. I resent that article as much as anyone, but . . .

JAMIESON. If it was written about your son, would you order him to keep away from the girl?

JONES. Well—er—wouldn't you?

JAMIESON. If I did—and he obeyed me—I'd throw him out in the street! (*KENNETH has crossed U.L. above RECTOR. His hand drops on the RECTOR's shoulder and he pantomimes to the RECTOR that JAMIESON has taken charge of the meeting.*)

COBB. Then you think it was a mistake for us to reduce the rector's salary, don't you?

JAMIESON. (*Deliberately*) Well, Andrew, that's none of my business.

HASBROUCK. But everyone here would value your opinion, Mr. Jamieson.

COBB. Of course we would.

SWETT. I'd like to hear it.

HIGGINBOTHAM. I wished you'd tell us what you think.

*Spoken  
together*

NORTON. I'll make notes of anything you say.

JAMIESON. (*Going right below easy chair*) What's the good of saying anything now—it's too late!

COBB. But we could reconsider our decision.

JAMIESON. I don't see that that would help any—now that the rector has resigned.

COBB. But he might reconsider, too.

JAMIESON. Well, if you would all apologize to his niece, and induce her to ask him to . . .

JONES. (*Coming center and speaking positively*) If you're speaking seriously, Mr. Jamieson, I can assure you that what you suggest is out of the question.

JAMIESON. (*Crosses center to him*) Indeed! Have you the power to speak for the whole vestry?

COBB. (*Before JONES can reply*) No, but he's in the habit of doing it.

JONES. (*Enraged*) That's untrue, Dr. Cobb. You know, all questions that arise in the vestry are put to vote, exactly as has been done in this case.

COBB. Exactly. They all vote just as you want them to, except me. (*He crosses U.R.*)

HASBROUCK. I don't think you can mean that, Doctor. I, for one, vote to the best of my judgment, and I'm sure we all do the same. (*The vestrymen nod and COBB crosses U.L., above vestrymen. JAMIESON turns to JUDGE HASBROUCK.*)

JAMIESON. Well, I can understand that you object to your church being laughed at.

HASBROUCK. We do, Mr. Jamieson.

JAMIESON. Judge, er . . .

HASBROUCK. (*Supplying the name*) Hasbrouck.

JAMIESON. Judge Hasbrouck, if you were sure that the three persons referred to here were in no way responsible for this gossip, would you have voted for a reduction in salary?

HASBROUCK. Why, no, sir.

SWETT. No more would I.

HIGGINBOTHAM. Me nuther.

NORTON. Ner me.

JONES. I hope you don't consider that I would have made the motion if I'd had any doubt who was to blame for that article.

JAMIESON. (*Turning to him slowly*) I must admit that I did have some such idea. (*The vestrymen turn to each other in surprise.*)

JONES. May I ask, sir, how you arrived at it?

JAMIESON. Because I imagined that you know how this story got into print.

JONES. (*Angrily*) Do you mean to say, Mr. Jamieson . . .

JAMIESON. No, no. I merely imagined.

JONES. Then your imagination is greatly at fault.

JAMIESON. That may be, but this paper is dated today, and I received a letter written three days ago by a member of your church, advising me to come up here and rescue my son from a designing young woman from Paris. (*RECTOR raises his head quickly.*) This letter contains so many remarkable similarities to the story in this paper that I cannot help believing that the paper's information must have come from the same source.

HASBROUCK. This is amazing, Mr. Jamieson, and I hope you will see fit to give us the name of the individual who wrote the letter.

JAMIESON. (*Taking letter from pocket*) I have the letter here. I will give it to your Senior Warden. He may do as he thinks best about reading it to you and giving you the name of the writer. (*He hands envelope to JONES, who takes it, glances at the*



*handwriting, starts, looks fearfully at JAMIESON, then at RECTOR and turns slowly U.R., taking letter from envelope. JAMIESON crosses D.R.—turns to vestry.)* Now, gentlemen, after talking the matter over with Mr. Jones, if you decide to reconsider your decision, I have a proposition that I'd like you to take up at the same time. *(The vestrymen turn toward JAMIESON. JONES opens letter and begins reading it.)* I've always intended doing something for your church, and I am so interested in this young woman's theory that I'd like to see it demonstrated. And if there is any way that you can induce Mr. Lee to continue with you, I will make you a contribution to be entirely devoted to the rector's salary, so that you will be relieved of that item of expense for all time. *(The vestrymen turn to one another delightedly. RECTOR rises slowly.)*

HASBROUCK. This is a most generous and remarkable offer, Mr. Jamieson. *(There is a murmur of assent from the vestrymen.)*

JAMIESON. I'd be glad if you could consider it at once and let me know your decision.

NORTON. We can hold a meeting right now in the other room, if you want us to. *(DR. COBB opens door U.L. and vestrymen file out.)*

COBB. Come along. Let's see if you can prove that you've minds of your own. *(He exits U.L. JONES turns and goes U.L. to door. In doorway, he turns to JAMIESON.)*

JONES. I had no idea about this letter, Mr. Jamieson, and I shall try to make amends for what harm has been done by it.

JAMIESON. A unanimous vote to offer Mr. Lee an apology will fix that.

JONES. I'll make that motion. *(He exits. KENNETH rushes over to his father and grabs him awkwardly around the waist.)*

KENNETH. Dad, you're a corker!

JAMIESON. (*Delighted, but shaking him off uncomfortably*) Here, what the devil are you doing?

KENNETH. Say, Mrs. Jones wrote that letter, didn't she?

JAMIESON. Uh, huh.

KENNETH. God bless the old hen! (*He exits U.R., calling as he runs off*) Oh, Diane, Diane! Can you come downstairs?

RECTOR. (*Crossing to JAMIESON R.C.*) Cornelius, how can I thank you?

JAMIESON. You don't owe me anything, old fellow. The—sermon you preached me about neglecting that youngster is worth whatever I do for you—and a damn sight more! (*The door U.R. is opened by KENNETH and DIANE enters. KENNETH remains in doorway, watching her.*)

RECTOR. Diane, dear! (*She crosses to him quickly and throws her arms around his neck. Door U.L. is opened by NORTON.*)

NORTON. Excuse me, Rector, but did you want the apology in here or out there?

RECTOR. (*Taking DIANE's hand*) I don't want it at all, Abner.

JAMIESON. Yes, you do! (*He turns to NORTON and points his finger down to indicate "In here."*) NORTON turns his finger down and looks at JAMIESON inquiringly; then goes to doorway U.L. and calls off left.)

NORTON. In here! (*The vestrymen file in as the curtain falls.*)

## CURTAIN

SECOND CURTAIN—*The RECTOR offers his hand to JONES, who crosses right and takes it.*

## ACT III

*A little after seven o'clock in the evening in November. The study has undergone a complete change. The furniture is new; the bookcases have been filled with rare editions. Handsomely carved desk D.L. with desk chair; and upholstered chair right of it; fender enclosing fireplace right. Right center is upholstered settee facing fireplace; backed by table, on which is lamp, few good books, etc. Left of table is chair.*

*Elaborate wall brackets; the old cracked panels in pillars have been replaced with new ones on which are mural decorations. A rich velvet carpet covers floor and several oil paintings are about the walls. Rich draperies cover windows U.C. Upholstered cushions on window seat U.C. and settle.*

AT RISE: *Shades are drawn and side brackets are lit, also lamp on table R.C. Door U.L. is open, showing lighted hall and room beyond, handsomely papered and carpeted.*

(HANNAH, in maid's uniform, hands evening paper to MORTON JONES, who is sitting on settee R.C.; then places jars of flowers on mantel; the fireplace is banked with autumn leaves and chrysanthemums. GRIGGS, the butler, in butler's uniform, enters U.L., and looks about room approvingly.)

GRIGGS. Hannah!

HANNAH. (*Turning at the sound of his voice*)  
Yes, Mr. Griggs?

GRIGGS. Miss Lee wants you to look after the ladies' wraps. They're to go in the room at the head of the stairs.

HANNAH. (*Crossing U.L.*) Yes, Mr. Griggs.

GRIGGS. Just see that there's hairpins and powder on the bureau.

HANNAH. (*As she goes off U.L.*) Yes, Mr. Griggs. (*Door bell rings.*)

GRIGGS. (*To JONES*) I think that's Mr. Jamieson now, sir. (*He turns U.L.*)

JONES. (*Rising and crossing left of table R.C.*)  
You'll say that I'll only detain him a moment, won't you?

GRIGGS. (*Going out U.L. to front door*) Yes, sir. (*He is about to open front door when it is opened by ANDY, who enters quickly.*)

ANDY. Right this way! (*JAMIESON enters, followed by valet carrying bag.*)

JAMIESON. Thank you, Mr. Beardsley. How are you, Griggs?

GRIGGS. Well, sir; thank you, sir.

JAMIESON. Just let Thomas know where my bag goes, will you?

ANDY. I'll show him. Right this way, young fellow. (*ANDY and VALET disappear. GRIGGS helps JAMIESON off with his coat and takes his hat.*)

GRIGGS. Mr. Jones has been waiting to see you, sir. He says he'll only detain you a moment.

JAMIESON. (*Coming into the study*) Oh! How do you do, Mr. Jones?

JONES. Mr. Jamieson. (*GRIGGS comes into study to shut door U.L.*)

JAMIESON. (*Turning U.L.*) Oh, Griggs! Where are the others?

GRIGGS. Dressing, sir.

JAMIESON. Oh! My train was nearly an hour late.

GRIGGS. Dinner's not till eight, sir. (*He exits, closing door.*)

JAMIESON. (*Coming D.L. to chair opposite rector's desk*) Then I've plenty of time. (*He sits, indicating chair left of table to JONES.*) What can I do for you, Mr. Jones?

JONES. (*Sitting*) My family is coming here to dinner tonight, but I wanted just a word with you beforehand.

JAMIESON. I thought my coming was to be a secret?

JONES. It was only your son who was not to know. Dear Miss Lee has arranged the dinner as a birthday surprise for him.

JAMIESON. (*A trifle impatiently*) Yes, I know.

JONES. A number of the parish wish to offer this to the rector tonight— (*He has risen and gone over to JAMIESON. He produces a watch-case from his pocket*) —as a slight token of our appreciation of his remarkable work. (*JAMIESON takes the case, opens it, and glances casually at the watch.*) But I wanted to be sure that it would meet with your approval.

JAMIESON. (*Closing the case and returning it to JONES*) Why should you think I'd object to it?

JONES. (*With a slight smile*) Well—er—we've been taught our lesson in regard to donations—and we were rather fearful . . .

JAMIESON. Oh, that's all right. You can give him anything you like, now that he doesn't need it.

JONES. (*Glancing about room*) He certainly doesn't need anything now.

JAMIESON. That was the idea! The story's gone all over the world. I've taken care of that. And they tell me your church can't begin to hold the crowds that come to hear him.

JONES. (*Crossing R.C. and sitting*) Yes, that's true.

JAMIESON. And do you read the editorials about his preaching?

JONES. Yes. But there's criticism, too—about the way he's living.

JAMIESON. He has nothing to do with the way he's living. Miss Lee is running the house and running it as I tell her to.

JONES. Oh! Well, people don't understand that.

JAMIESON. Anyhow, his sermons are being quoted all over the country now, and no one paid the slightest attention to them when he was living on starvation wages and charity. And I want to tell you, Mr. Jones, that Miss Lee made a great discovery about what was wrong with our churches. I've been giving money away for years to savages, heathen, foreign missions and all that truck, but this experience is showing me that Christians are more uncivilized right here in this country than any bunch of heathen on earth!

JONES. You mean—because of the way we treat our ministers?

JAMIESON. For one thing—yes. Why, we turn them into "thank-you" men!

JONES. (*Repeating the phrase to himself*) "Thank you men?" (*He turns to JAMIESON for an explanation.*) "Thank you men?"

JAMIESON. Yes. They live a life of "thank you." They have to thank you for food, they have to thank you for your contributions, they have to thank you for the money they solicit for charity—and then they have to turn it over to the vestry and let the vestry get the thanks for giving it out. They have to thank you for a tip at your wedding and thank your widow for a tip at your funeral! (*He rises slowly.*) Now, ministers cannot control and guide people they're always begging from—and if they can't guide them,

what damn good are they? (GRIGGS enters U.L., stands at door and speaks to JAMIESON.)

GRIGGS. Beg pardon, sir, but Thomas is quite ready for you. (GRIGGS exits into hallway, gets JONES' coat and stands U.L., waiting.)

JONES. (Rising quickly) Oh, I'm sorry. I'd forgotten I was keeping you. (He shakes hands with JAMIESON.) I hope we may have a chance to continue this most interesting talk later in the evening. (He goes U.L. and GRIGGS helps him into overcoat. JAMIESON crosses right, looking about room curiously. JONES turns at doorway.) And you are sure you approve of our presenting our little token?

JAMIESON. Quite sure.

JONES. Thank you. Good night for the present.

JAMIESON. Good night, sir. (GRIGGS hands JONES his hat and opens front door for him.)

JAMIESON. Griggs!

GRIGGS. (Shutting front door) Yes, sir?

JAMIESON. How do you like it here, Griggs?

GRIGGS. (Coming D.C. into study) Very much indeed, sir.

JAMIESON. Who's your second man?

GRIGGS. We haven't one, sir.

JAMIESON. Why not? I told you to get one.

GRIGGS. Miss Lee wanted to re-engage Hannah, sir. She used to be the housekeeper.

JAMIESON. Oh! Who's this Andy Beardsley?

GRIGGS. (Smilingly) He's the household pet, sir.

JAMIESON. Oh! He greeted me at the station like a long-lost brother.

GRIGGS. Yes, sir, he would. He helps Mr. Lee with his charities, sir. It's getting late, sir.

JAMIESON. Well, I'll have a talk with you before I go. (As he gets to door U.L. the door bell rings.) They're not starting to come now, are they?

GRIGGS. (Going into the hallway U.L.) I think

not, sir. It's only seven-thirty. Your room is at the end of the hall, sir.

JAMIESON. (*Off left*) I'll find it. (*GRIGGS opens the front door and NORTON enters, evidently not having seen GRIGGS before. He glances timidly at GRIGGS and backs into the study. GRIGGS closes front door and comes into the study.*)

NORTON. I'm Abner Norton—Vestryman Abner Norton.

GRIGGS. Oh, yes, sir. You've been away, sir.

NORTON. For a long time. I come in to see Mr. Lee. (*GRIGGS takes a step right as if to offer NORTON a chair. NORTON follows him quickly.*) That is, if he ain't occupied.

GRIGGS. His Reverence is dressing, sir.

NORTON. (*Puzzled*) Dressin'? Well, I don't want to bother him if he's busy.

GRIGGS. Oh, I'll take up your name, sir. Mr. Lee's very particular about that.

NORTON. Particular about takin' up my name?

GRIGGS. My orders are never to refuse to let anyone see him, sir.

NORTON. Oh!

GRIGGS. Won't you have a seat, sir? (*NORTON obediently seats himself quickly in chair left of table R.C. GRIGGS waits until NORTON is seated, then goes to him, takes hat politely from him and exits U.L., leaving door open; places hat on rack in hall.*)

(*NORTON waits until GRIGGS has disappeared; then rises and quietly tiptoes to hallway; gets hat; hears someone coming and hastily comes back into study and sits in chair R.C., hiding his hat. ANDY enters U.L., dressed neatly, in great contrast to his appearance in Act II.*)

NORTON. Why, Andy, is that you? (*ANDY has gone directly to rector's desk, on which are piles of*



*papers, checks, lists, etc.; he turns and speaks condescendingly to NORTON.)*

ANDY. Why, hello, Abner! When did you get home?

NORTON. *(Looking open-mouthed at ANDY'S changed appearance)* Day before yesterday.

ANDY. *(Sorting papers)* Made quite a stay, didn't you?

NORTON. I had all my brother's affairs to settle up. I thought I'd never get home. And now I am back it don't seem like the same place.

ANDY. *(Crossing right to settee)* Well, 'tain't!

NORTON. *(Confidentially)* I just seen that new feller the rector's got!

ANDY. Oh, Griggs! *(ANDY eases himself into a comfortable position on settee, his back to NORTON, and begins checking over papers, as though he were accustomed to it.)*

NORTON. I don't know what his name is, but I heard he was here. *(He is struck by a sudden thought; rises and leans toward ANDY.)* Say, Andy, the rector ain't been sick, has he?

ANDY. Sick! Judas priest, what put that in your head?

NORTON. Why, I thought the new man said he was a-dressin', and I couldn't figure out why he'd be a-gettin' up this time o' day.

ANDY. *(Turning to him disgustedly)* He ain't gettin' up—he's dressin' up for dinner.

NORTON. Dressin' up for dinner? What do you mean?

ANDY. I mean Miss Diane's havin' dinner nights now and they put on different clothes for it.

NORTON. You ain't a-tellin' me they ain't had their supper!

ANDY. I'm a-tellin' you they ain't had their dinner! And they won't till eight o'clock, and there's a big party comin'—over twenty of 'em.

NORTON. (*Aghast*) Well, well! I'd never have come around here now if I'd a-knowed that! (*He looks around room timidly.*)

ANDY. Oh, it's all right, Ab. Sit down and make yourself to home. Dinner ain't for half an hour yet. (*NORTON sits in his chair as GRIGGS enters U.L., coming down on NORTON's left. NORTON hides hat behind him quickly.*)

GRIGGS. Mr. Lee will be pleased to see you, sir. He will be down presently. (*NORTON rises and bows. GRIGGS turns U.L.*)

ANDY. (*Casually*) Oh, Griggs!

GRIGGS. (*Turning and coming D.L.—speaks very politely*) Yes, Mr. Beardsley?

ANDY. The see-gars, Griggs.

GRIGGS. Cigars. Yes, sir. (*He exits U.L. ANDY rises, glances slyly at NORTON, puts his papers together and saunters across stage to rector's desk L.*)

(*GRIGGS re-enters U.L. with large cigar humidor, starts down to NORTON. As he reaches him, ANDY turns at the minister's desk and sees him.*)

ANDY. Griggs!

GRIGGS. (*Turning to ANDY*) Yes, sir?

ANDY. Bring 'em here!

GRIGGS. (*With a glance at NORTON*) Beg pardon, sir. (*He crosses, holds humidor toward ANDY. ANDY looks the contents over critically and selects a large, expensive-looking cigar. GRIGGS looks at ANDY and stands undecidedly.*)

ANDY. Have a see-gar, Ab?

NORTON. Well, I don't mind if I do. (*GRIGGS turns to NORTON.*)

ANDY. (*Following him center*) Griggs!

GRIGGS. Yes, sir? (*ANDY again looks over the contents, GRIGGS watching him in mild surprise.*)



"THANK YOU!"



*while he selects a much smaller cigar and crosses with it to ANDY.)*

ANDY. (*Offering NORTON the cigar and turning U.C.*) Here!

NORTON. Thanks! (*In the meantime GRIGGS has put the humidior on the rector's desk, picked up match-box and now lights match and starts again to NORTON. ANDY turns D.L., cigar in mouth, and sees GRIGGS.*)

ANDY. Griggs! (*GRIGGS turns, ANDY takes the lighted match from him and goes U.L., lighting cigar. GRIGGS lights another match and offers it to NORTON.*)

NORTON. (*Half rising and speaking politely*) I guess I won't smoke it in here, if you don't mind. (*GRIGGS extinguishes match, goes to desk, places matches on table and exits U.L., closing door.*)

NORTON. (*Turning to ANDY, after watching GRIGGS off, suddenly explodes*) By gum, Andy, you have it mighty easy around here! (*ANDY has seated himself in chair right of rector's desk, crossed his legs and is enjoying his cigar.*)

ANDY. (*Positively*) Don't you believe it! Everybody in this house works!

NORTON. (*Scathingly*) Works! What at—spendin' money?

ANDY. Yes, spending money—and spendin' it where it'll do the most good.

NORTON. On see-gars—and that Griggs feller—and dinners for twenty folks?

ANDY. Oh, no! All that's Miss Diane's part. She gets a regular allowance to run the house with, but the rector can do what he likes with the rest of the money. (*He rises, takes lists and checks from desk and crosses right to NORTON.*) See that list? Forty-two names on it! Them's Thanksgiving dinners. And me and his chauffeur's got to deliver 'em. (*Shows NORTON checks.*) And look at them checks

waitin' to be signed. They're for every kind of thing that he's found out people around here needs.

NORTON. They say he's throwin' money away right and left.

ANDY. 'Tain't true! He's only throwin' it away right. *(He replaces papers and checks on desk.)*

*(Door U.L. is opened by GRIGGS and a moment later the RECTOR enters, coming quickly down to NORTON and shaking hands cordially. He is in clerical evening dress. GRIGGS exits, closing door.)*

RECTOR. How do you do, Abner? I only heard today that you were home.

NORTON. *(Astonished at the RECTOR's appearance)* I hope you'll excuse me comin' at such a time.

RECTOR. Why, that's all right, Abner.

NORTON. But I was askin' Warden Jones 'bout sendin' out notices for the next vestry meetin' and he wanted me to find out what time would be most agreeable to you.

RECTOR. Well, let me see. *(He looks at ANDY, who has picked up appointment book and is looking through it for a date.)* Andy?

ANDY. I can give you Friday.

RECTOR. *(To NORTON)* How about Friday?

NORTON. Any time you say.

RECTOR. *(To ANDY)* What time?

ANDY. Three-thirty.

RECTOR. *(To NORTON)* Then Friday at half-past three. *(ANDY makes the notation in book.)*

*(NORTON gets pencil and notebook from pocket hurriedly; while he is doing this ANDY speaks to RECTOR.)*

ANDY. You wanted these checks in the post-office tonight, Rector.

RECTOR. So I did. Excuse me, Abner. (ANDY goes above desk, getting pen, blotter, checks, etc., ready. RECTOR goes behind desk, lights desk lamp and commences signing checks. ANDY blots each check, encloses it and seals envelope, etc.)

NORTON. Friday . . . (He stops and thinks a moment.) What's Friday?

ANDY. Friday's Friday—the day after Thursday.

RECTOR. (With a smile) The twenty-fifth, Abner.

NORTON. (Writing) "Friday, the twenty-fifth." Where shall we have it?

RECTOR. Why not here? Then you can all stay for tea.

NORTON. Tea? Shall I put that in the notice?

RECTOR. By all means.

NORTON. Now I'll get out before the folks start comin'. (He puts notebook and pencil in pocket and crosses left to RECTOR. ANDY pushes button, left of door U.L.) Good night, Rector. (RECTOR rises and shakes hands.)

RECTOR. Good night.

NORTON. I'm mighty glad to see you so prosperous.

RECTOR. Thank you, Abner. (NORTON starts U.L. to door. GRIGGS opens door, and NORTON, amazed to see it open before him, walks slowly, keeping his eyes on GRIGGS.)

ANDY. Good night, Abner. (NORTON comes to doorway, looks about room and finally at ANDY.)

NORTON. Oh! Good night—and thanks for the see-gar.

ANDY. It's the best one you ever smoked. (NORTON is about to exit through front door when GRIGGS finds his hat on the table R.C.)

GRIGGS. Mr. Norton! (*He goes to table R.C., gets hat and goes up to doorway U.L. as NORTON comes back.*) Your hat, sir.

NORTON. Oh, thank you. I'm always leavin' somethin'. Good night, sir. (*He exits, GRIGGS following him off and closing door U.L.*)

(DIANE enters U.R. in smart, though simple, evening gown. Carries three gardenias. Places two on table R.C., crosses left to rector, who is still signing checks.)

DIANE. Why, you got down first, Uncle! (RECTOR turns quickly, rises and goes to her L.C.)

RECTOR. You look lovely, dear.

DIANE. (*Putting gardenia in his buttonhole*) So do you. (*Door bell rings.*)

(DIANE crosses to ANDY, who is folding checks, etc.

RECTOR has crossed D.R. and is sitting on fender D.R.)

DIANE. Andy!

ANDY. (*Going to her L.C.*) Yes, ma'am?

DIANE. I thought you were going to the station to meet Mr. Kenneth's father.

ANDY. Why, I brought him back just a little while ago.

DIANE. But where is he?

ANDY. In the spare room, with his valay a-dress-in' him up.

RECTOR. He isn't in the spare room, Andy.

ANDY. He ain't? Well, Judas priest, that's where I put him!

RECTOR. (*Chuckling*) But he escaped from there and came into my room, and I've been trying to reason with him.

DIANE. What about?



RECTOR. About all this extravagance. I told him a minister shouldn't live this way—and I could do so much good with the money it costs!

DIANE. What did he say?

RECTOR. He said he knew what he was doing and wanted me to grin and bear it for six months more. (DIANE and ANDY smile.)

(GRIGGS enters U.L. and stands in doorway.)

GRIGGS. Judge and Mrs. Hasbruock are here.

(RECTOR rises and crosses U.L.)

DIANE. (Stopping him centre) Oh, Uncle, will you go out and meet everybody?

RECTOR. Certainly, dear.

DIANE. I've something to do in here. (RECTOR exits U.L., GRIGGS following him off and closing door. A murmur of "How do you do, Judge?" "Why, Rector!" etc., is heard as the door closes.)

DIANE. (Half-whispering) Now, Andy, will you go for Mr. Kenneth? And bring him in at the side door, but be sure not to tell him that there's a party, or that his father's here.

ANDY. But he knows he's comin' to dinner, don't he?

DIANE. Yes, but that's all he knows. (Door U.L. opens and JAMIESON enters in evening dress.)

JAMIESON. (Going D.L. to DIANE) Well, here you are!

DIANE. (Giving him both hands) Oh, I'm so glad to see you! (She goes to table R.C., takes a gardenia to JAMIESON and puts it in his buttonhole.) I only just found out you'd arrived.

ANDY. (Who has crossed U.R.) Is there anything more, Miss Lee?

DIANE. That's all, Andy.

ANDY. Then I'll go for the guest of honor. (*He exits U.R., closing door.*)

DIANE. (*With a movement U.L.*) They're all going into the other room.

JAMIESON. Yes. That's the reason I came in here. (*He crosses right to fender D.R.*) David can look out for them, can't he?

DIANE. Oh, yes. (*She crosses slowly to settee.*)

JAMIESON. That's good! Because I've got something to say to you, young lady, and I don't know when I'll get another chance. First, I think you've done wonders with this old house. (*He sits on fender.*)

DIANE. (*Greatly pleased*) You told me to lay it on thick, and I've tried to. (*She sits on settee.*)

JAMIESON. That's what I want. Let's find out exactly what people think about having their minister live better than they do.

DIANE. (*Laughing*) Yes, but I'm sure it's worried Uncle.

JAMIESON. Nonsense! Why, he's delighted with everything. He's been raving like a schoolgirl over what you've been doing.

DIANE. (*Amused*) He hasn't talked that way to me. Why, when he first saw the automobiles, he actually trembled, and when you sent us Griggs and the chef—well, he hasn't recovered from that yet. (*JAMIESON smiles.*)

JAMIESON. And you can pay all expenses and keep within your allowance?

DIANE. Yes, and it's lucky I can, because Uncle gives away everything he gets.

JAMIESON. What do you mean?

DIANE. I mean he's doing now what he's wanted to do all his life—as he says, “helping people according to their needs.” (*Rising.*) I'd like to show you a list of the wonderful things he's done. (*She starts L. to rector's desk.*)

JAMIESON. (*Rising and crossing left*) I'd rather talk to you about something important.

DIANE. (*Coming back to chair left of table*) What?

JAMIESON. (*Sitting on down-stage arm of settee*) You and Kenneth. Are you two engaged?

DIANE. (*Slowly sinking in chair*) Of course not!

JAMIESON. Why "of course not"?

DIANE. I'm surprised that you should ask. (*She leans toward him confidentially*) Why, Kenneth has been having affairs ever since he went away to school!

JAMIESON. Oh, but he's all over that and you know it. Is that the only reason?

DIANE. Oh, no!

JAMIESON. Well, what else?

DIANE. Well—there's his father! He told us to keep away from each other.

JAMIESON. Oh! Well, he gives his consent.

DIANE. I don't think he's been asked to.

JAMIESON. That's what I'm talking about. He wants to be asked to.

DIANE. Oh, I'm afraid that's out of the question.

JAMIESON. Why? What other reasons have you got?

DIANE. There are a lot more. One is that Kenneth can't afford it.

JAMIESON. Now what do you mean by that?

DIANE. Well, he has a good farm and he's trying to make it pay by raising tobacco, but he hasn't had time enough yet to be sure that he can.

JAMIESON. Well, suppose I see to that?

DIANE. (*Rising and going to him*) Oh, no, please don't! He's trying so awfully hard to earn his own living. Please don't spoil his chance by giving him money.

JAMIESON. All right, I won't. (*He rises sud-*

denly.) But suppose he does prove he can make money enough to support a wife. Then what?

DIANE. Then it will be time enough for him to decide if he wants one.

JAMIESON. Any more reasons?

DIANE. Haven't I given enough?

JAMIESON. (*Turning from her and walking right*) You haven't given me one yet that amounts to a damn! (*DIANE smiles. JAMIESON turns to her.*) Now, if you don't love Kenneth and he doesn't love you, the worst thing you could do would be to get married; but if you do love each other, I rather think it's the best thing that could happen to you, and I know it's the best thing that could happen to him; and I don't want you to waste any more time about it. (*He draws envelope from pocket; takes out papers and crosses with them to DIANE.*) Do you know what these are?

DIANE. (*Glancing at them*) Steamship tickets!

JAMIESON. (*Quickly*) Yes, and they call for the bridal suite, and the boat sails next Thursday! And I want to take David down to see you and your husband off on it! (*He closes her hand over the tickets.*)

DIANE. (*Stepping back in amazement*) Mr. Jamieson!

JAMIESON. You needn't worry about your uncle, because I'm taking him on a trip with me next month. (*He crosses below her and walks slowly left.*) I'm going to show him around the world a bit. (*He turns at the rector's desk.*) I'm going to let him see . . . (*Door U.R. opens and ANDY enters, coming clear into the room and followed by KENNETH.*)

ANDY. Right in here! (*He stops quickly on seeing JAMIESON. He is wearing automobile coat. KENNETH wears dinner coat, overcoat. KENNETH stops L.C. as he sees his father. DIANE snatches gardenia from table and stands R.C.*)

ANDY. (*Disgustedly*) Now I've spoiled it! But 'tain't my fault! Judas priest, you told me to bring him in at the side door!

KENNETH. (*Starting D.L., to JAMIESON*) Why, Dad, where in the . . . (*He stops; turns and crosses D.R. to DIANE.*) I say, what is this?

DIANE. (*Fixing gardenia in his buttonhole*) Your birthday.

KENNETH. How did you know that?

ANDY. (*Coming D.C.*) She knew it because I told her.

KENNETH. (*Crossing to JAMIESON*) And is that why you're here, Dad?

JAMIESON. I came up because Diane invited me to a dinner party and I had some business to attend to.

KENNETH. (*Surprised*) Business? What was it?

JAMIESON. (*Indicating DIANE, who looks at him horrified*) Ask her! (*KENNETH makes a move toward DIANE.*) Wait a minute! (*He crosses to ANDY, who is now U.C.*) Mr. Beardsley.

ANDY. Yes, sir? (*KENNETH goes D.L., takes off coat and throws it on chair left of desk.*)

JAMIESON. I'm going out here to meet the guests and give these young people an opportunity to talk over a proposition I've made.

ANDY. (*Grinning*) Yes, sir.

JAMIESON. And I'd suggest that as I go out this door—(*Indicating door U.L.*)—you go out that one. (*Indicating door U.R.*)

ANDY. Yes, sir. You need say no more. (*He exits U.R. as JAMIESON exits U.L.*)

KENNETH. (*After a slight pause*) Is there a party out there?

DIANE. About twenty.

KENNETH. On account of my birthday? (*DIANE nods.*)

KENNETH. Well, what do you think of that? I—I hadn't the least idea you were doing it. (*He takes a step toward her. DIANE quickly snatches steamship tickets from table and hides them behind her.*) What's that?

DIANE. Nothing.

KENNETH. (*Crossing to her R.C.*) Say, what did father mean? What's this business that you can tell me about?

DIANE. He wants—Uncle and me to go abroad! (*She puts steamship ticket envelope in his hand.*)

KENNETH. Is that so? Soon?

DIANE. Yes.

KENNETH. Well, are you going?

DIANE. I haven't decided. What do you think about it?

KENNETH. Wouldn't you like to go back to France—I mean, just for a visit?

DIANE. Why, yes, I would.

KENNETH. Then you shall. (*He suddenly kisses her.*)

DIANE. (*Stepping back in mock surprise*) Kenneth! How dare you?

KENNETH. Ah, don't mind that, Diane. It's my birthday!

DIANE. Oh!

KENNETH. And another thing—I've had an offer of twenty cents a pound for my tobacco!

DIANE. (*Delighted*) Oh, Kenneth, have you?

KENNETH. Twenty cents a pound will give us a wedding trip.

DIANE. Wedding trip!

KENNETH. Why, yes. And I'm holding out for twenty-two cents. That will give us something in the bank as well! (*DIANE looks at him amused, turns, goes to fender D.R. and sits.*)

DIANE. Before talking of wedding trips, isn't it customary to propose to the girl?

KENNETH. But that's what I am doing.

DIANE. (*Thoughtfully*) Oh! (KENNETH *smiles, goes to her and takes her hand.*)

KENNETH. Diane, will you marry me?

DIANE. Unless I did—I would not want to live! (KENNETH *is about to take her in his arms, when a light knock on door U.L. is heard and JAMIESON opens it.*)

JAMIESON. Do you know, you're keeping twenty people from dinner?

KENNETH. Excuse us, Dad—we've been getting engaged!

JAMIESON. Well, you've been taking a devil of a time about it! (*He crosses to DIANE D.R. and puts his hands on her shoulders.*) Look up here! (*DIANE raises her head and looks at him.*) I've wanted a daughter ever since I met you, my dear.

GRIGGS. (*In doorway U.L.—laughter, chatter and soft music heard off left*) I've announced dinner, Miss.

JAMIESON. (*Going U.L. to GRIGGS*) Griggs, get Mr. Lee in here for a moment.

GRIGGS. (*Stepping back into hallway*) Mr. Lee! If you please, sir. (KENNETH *comes down quickly to DIANE. He has opened envelope and examined the tickets. They talk about it excitedly.*)

RECTOR. (*Appearing in doorway U.L., glancing back*) I'll be back in a minute. (KENNETH *takes DIANE's hand as the RECTOR enters room.*)

JAMIESON. David, these two young folks want your blessing! (GRIGGS *exits U.L., closing door. RECTOR stands a moment in delighted surprise; looks at JAMIESON, then crosses slowly D.R. to DIANE and KENNETH; tries to speak, but is afraid to trust his voice—puts a hand on KENNETH's shoulder, the other on DIANE's and bows his head a moment, as though in prayer; takes DIANE into his arms, offering his right hand to KENNETH. JAMIESON, U.L., watches*

*them as long as he can, then opens door U.L. and speaks gruffly.)*

JAMIESON. Come, come, David, break away! Diane, try and think about your guests!

DIANE. *(Crossing quickly to door U.L.)* Oh!

KENNETH. Diane—— *(He follows her U.L., puts her hand on his arm; they glance back and smile at RECTOR and JAMIESON as they exit U.L. They are greeted by a roar of "Happy Birthday!" by the guests. Then the murmur of voices grows fainter. JAMIESON turns, goes quickly U.L.)*

RECTOR. *(Crossing quickly to JAMIESON U.L. and speaking with great feeling)* Oh, Cornelius! Cornelius!

JAMIESON. *(Taking RECTOR's hand and speaking gruffly)* I know, old fellow, I know! Come on! *(He puts an arm around the RECTOR's shoulder and they exit U.L., as the guests break into soft cheer.)*

CURTAIN



## PROPERTY PLOT

### ACT I

Floor cloth painted to represent boards.  
Over this a rag carpet that comes up in Act II. Fire-grate cut in floor c.  
Desk down L. with old writing-set and prayer-book.  
L. on F. desk old armchair.  
R. of desk straight back chair. (Horsehair.)  
Chair up L. of window.  
Table and chair below door up R.  
Chair down R. and chair up end of fireplace.  
Mantel down R. on which is a clock, two vases and a ladies' cigarette case.  
The book shelves are filled with old books and magazines.  
The walls are covered with old pictures.  
There are cushions on window seat and settee down R.  
Fire log. Fire screen. Fire irons. Fire tools in fireplace.  
Icicles hanging in window.

### OFF STAGE L.

Table and chair at back. Two pictures.  
Four chairs to be brought on by HANNAH.  
Five logs of wood for WILLETTS.  
Card wrapped in tissue paper for BETSY.  
Coffee cup, spoon, saucer and coffee (HANNAH.)  
Tea tray, three napkins, three cups, three saucers, three spoons, teapot, tea-ball, sugar bowl and sugar, plate of French cakes.

Small ash tray.

Door bell, old one on spring.

Snow to blow across window.

Notebook and pencil for ABNER.

OFF STAGE R.

Wooden plate of cakes wrapped and tied with string.

(RECTOR.)

Box of matches. (KENNETH.)

Whiskey flask. (KENNETH.)

Telegram. (KENNETH.)

OFF C.

Dead branches snow piled up in window.

ELECTRIC

L. 1000 w. bunch R. on drop.

I. 1000 w. spot to hit icicles.

Four hanging 1000 w. bunch lights, two with dimmers.

Strip of ten lights back of church.

Fan to blow snow on floor L.

Border of white and amber on stage.

Foots about fourteen amber and fourteen white 60 w. lamps.

Off stage in entrance R. strip two lights.

Off stage L. strip two lights.

In second entrance up L. strip one light.

Strip of ten lights, amber in foots, on separate switch.

Baby spot in fireplace with amber and frost color.

Fire log lit at opening, logs closed at cue—KENNETH'S entrance start to turn, keep turning un-

till full on. Start to dim and are out at cue—  
“Funerals have never been my long suit.”

At curtain KENNETH's entrance two 1000 w. lights  
at back to dim and are out at cue—“Funerals  
have never been my long suit.”

Foots and border start to dim at cue—“Just after  
KENNETH's entrance.”

## ACT II

All old pictures have been taken off walls and are  
piled at R. end of bench up c.

Fire logs have been removed and fire irons, screen,  
fire tools, etc., are turned up in fireplace.

All the books have been taken down and are piled  
on the floor front of the bookcases.

The rug has been folded in to the R. of door L. and  
to edge of settee up R.

Under the rug and on top of the floor cloth are  
newspapers.

The large armchair from down R. has been pushed  
up into the fireplace. The chair from up R. is  
on the edge of carpet at R.C.

The chair from R. of table L. is back of table.

The snow has been removed from windows and win-  
dows, lower part, taken out.

The dead branches have been replaced by flowers.

### OFF STAGE L.

Broom, whisk broom, mop, dustpan.

Tray, containing bowl of “Poor Man's Pudding,”  
glass of water, napkin, spoon.

### OFF STAGE R.

Large piece of clothesline. Three Middletown  
*Spades*.

THANK YOU  
ELECTRICAL PLOT

OFF R.

One 1000 w. spot amber hitting flowers in window.  
Two 1000 w. bunches on drop.  
One 1000 w. spot pink on church.  
Four hanging 1000 w. bunches (white).

OFF L.

Five 1000 w. bunch on drop (amber).  
Foots and border amber and white full up.

ACT III

All furniture has been replaced.  
Blue carpet on stage.  
Desk at L., heavy brass writing set, card index, etc.  
Armchair L. of it (brown velvet).  
Side chair R. of desk. Seat of blue velvet.  
Table at R.C. Small brown velvet settle R. of it.  
Armchair, seat of blue velvet, L. of it.  
Club fender at fireplace.  
The windows at back are covered with a large blue velvet drape.  
There are blue velvet seats on window bench and settee.  
The broken pannel over the fireplace has been removed and replaced with an oil painting.  
There is a tapestry over door up R.  
A large oil painting over door up L. and over bookcases at back L. *and* L.  
The book shelves have all been filled with new books.  
There are two pots of flowers, one above and one below fireplace.  
Brown velvet throw on table R. to c.

Winged Victory on shelf over settee and two vases of flowers.

The furniture in parlor up L. has been changed to new pieces, also the drape.

## ELECTRICAL PLOT

Lamp on table R. of c.

Lamp on desk L.

Brackets, one up L., one in post at L. and one in post at R. All frost and lit at curtain.

Foots and border, amber and white, full up.

## Dulcy

Comedy in 3 acts. By George S. Kaufman and Marc Connelly (with a bow to Franklin P. Adams), 3 males, 3 females. 1 interior. Costumes, modern. Plays  $2\frac{1}{4}$  hours.

In her determination to help her husband and friends Dulcy plans a week-end party. They are an ill-assorted group, such as only a Dulcinea could summon about her. Their brief association becomes a series of hilarious tragedies. It is Dulcy's final blunder which unexpectedly crowns her efforts with success.

Meanwhile she has all but ruined her husband's plans to put through a big merger with a rich capitalist. Among her guests is a rapturous scenario writer who conspires to elope with the daughter of the capitalist, who loathes motion pictures. The rich young man from Newport, who Dulcy thinks may be useful in assisting the capitalist's wife to write for the films, turns out to be an escaped lunatic. The ex-convict butler steals a necklace. Everything goes wrong. But the most exquisite torture she inflicts is when she invites the scenario writer to recite one of his hectic plots to music played by the lunatic. It is with this that the play reaches its highest level of satirical fun.

"Dulcy" ran for a season in New York, and is now on tour throughout the United States and Canada. Royalty, \$25.00. Price, 75 cents.

## Come Out of the Kitchen

Comedy in 3 acts, adapted by A. E. Thomas from the story by Alice Duer Miller. 6 males, 5 females. 3 interiors. Costumes, modern. Plays  $2\frac{1}{2}$  hours.

"Come Out of the Kitchen," with Ruth Chatterton in the leading role, made a notable success on its production by Henry Miller in New York. It was also a great success in London. A most ingenious and entertaining comedy. We strongly recommend it for amateur production. Royalty, \$25.00. Price, 75 cents.

## Kempy

Comedy in 3 acts, by J. C. Nugent and Elliott Nugent. 4 males, 4 females. 1 interior throughout. Costumes, modern. Plays  $2\frac{1}{2}$  hours.

The story is about a highfalutin daughter who in a fit of pique marries the young plumber-architect, who comes to fix the water pipe, just because he "understands" her, having read her book and sworn to marry the authoress. But in that story lies all the humor that kept the audience laughing every second.

The amateur acting rights are reserved for the present in all cities and towns where there are stock companies. Royalty will be quoted on application for those cities and towns where it may be presented by amateurs. Price, 75 cents.

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## Golden Days

A comedy of youth, in 4 acts, by Sidney Toler and Marion Short. 7 males, 10 females. 3 interiors. Costumes modern. Plays  $2\frac{1}{2}$  hours.

"Golden Days" is a play with all the charm of youth. It enjoyed a run of sixteen weeks in Chicago, then came to New York, with Helen Hayes as "Mary Anne". Royalty, \$25.00. Price, 75 cents.

## The Intimate Strangers

A delightful comedy in 3 acts, by Booth Tarkington. 4 males, 4 females. 2 interiors. Costumes, modern. Plays  $2\frac{1}{2}$  hours.

Beginning with the girl of yesterday and a lawyer of uncertain age, stranded in a railway station, half starved and uncertain of the future, because a hurricane wrecked railway hopes on both the main and branch line, it carries the audience to the home of the girl, where, with delicious comedy, the blase lawyer is tortured into submission, after he has dared doubt the age of the girl whose hand he kissed the night before.

Having expressed a sharp opinion of "brazen young huzzies in breeches," he is subjected to the siege of a young woman "in breeches", who longs for an adventure with an elderly man.

The lines are delicious and the situations amusing. Royalty, \$25.00. Price, 75 cents.

## Billeted

Comedy in 3 acts, by F. Tennison Jesse and H. Harwood. 4 males, 5 females. 1 easy interior. A charming comedy, constructed with uncommon skill, and abounds with clever lines. Margaret Anglin's big success. Amateurs will find this comedy easy to produce and popular with all audiences. Royalty, \$25.00. Price, 60 cents.

## Just Suppose

A whimsical comedy in 3 acts, by A. E. Thomas, author of "Come Out of the Kitchen", etc. 6 males, 2 females. 1 interior, 1 exterior. Costumes, modern. Plays  $2\frac{1}{4}$  hours.

It was rumored that during his visit to this country the Prince of Wales got away from the pomp of his position and appeared for a time under an assumed name. It is on this that A. E. Thomas based "Just Suppose". The action takes place in Fairview, Va., where Linda Lee Stafford meets George Shipley, (in reality the Prince). It is love at first sight, but, alas, princes cannot select their mates and thereby hangs a tale which Mr. Thomas has woven with infinite charm. The atmosphere of the south dominates the story, touching in its sentiment and lightened with delightful comedy.

Scored a big hit in New York. Royalty, \$25.00. Price, 75 cents.

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## **The Famous Mrs. Fair**

A play in 4 acts. By James Forbes, author of "The Commuters", "The Traveling Salesman", etc. 3 males, 10 females. 2 interiors. Costumes modern. Plays 2½ hours.

Mrs. Fair was a major abroad and won a medal for bravery. Her husband was displeased when Mrs. Fair came home to a fame which lifted her out of his life. The dissatisfaction grew as she became absorbed in public functions. Mr. Forbes traces the widening of the rift between husband and wife with great skill in the first two acts. These are light comedy. In the third the mood becomes serious and we find that Mrs. Fair's absence from home has set the husband to philandering and the daughter to intimacy with a gay set. Indeed, only through the joint efforts of husband and wife to save the girl from danger, is harmony again established.

A true comedy, written with keen insight. Royalty, \$35.00. Price, 75 cents.

## **Nothing But the Truth**

Comedy in 3 acts. By James Montgomery. 5 males, 6 females. Costumes, modern. 2 interiors. Plays 2½ hours.

Is it possible to tell the absolute truth—even for twenty-four hours? It is—at least Bob Bennett, hero of "Nothing But the Truth", accomplished the feat. The bet he made with his business partners, and the trouble he got into is the subject of William Collier's tremendous comedy hit. "Nothing But the Truth" can be whole-heartedly recommended as one of the most sprightly, amusing and popular comedies. Royalty, \$25.00. Price, 60 cents.

## **On the Hiring Line**

Comedy in 3 acts, by Harvey O'Higgins and Harriet Ford. 5 males, 4 females. 1 interior. Costumes, modern. Plays 2¼ hours.

Sherman Fessenden, unable to induce servants to remain at his Jersey home, hits upon the expedient of engaging detectives as domestics.

His second wife, an actress, weary of the country, has succeeded in discouraging every other cook and butler against remaining long, believing that she will convince her husband that country life is dead. So she is deeply disappointed when she finds she cannot discourage the new servants.

The sleuths, believing they are called to report on those living with the Fessendens, warn Fessenden that his wife has been receiving love-notes from an actor friend, and that his daughter is planning to elope with a supposed thief.

One sleuth causes an uproar making a mess of the situations he has witnessed. Fessenden, however, has learned a lesson and is willing to leave the servant problem to his wife.

Enjoyed long runs in New York and Chicago. Royalty, \$25.00. Price, 75 cents.

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## Daddy Long-Legs

A charming comedy in 4 acts, by Jean Webster, 6 males, 7 females, and 6 orphans, but by easy doubling of some characters, ~~may~~ be played by 4 males, 4 females and 3 orphans. The orphans appear only in the first act and may be played by small girls. 4 easy interiors. Costumes modern. Plays 2½ hours.

The New York Times wrote the following:

"If you will take your pencil and write down, one below the other, the words delightful, charming, sweet, beautiful and entertaining, and then draw a line and add them up, the answer will be 'Daddy Long-Legs'. To that result you might even add brilliant, pathetic and humorous, but the answer even then would be just what it was before—the play which Miss Jean Webster has made from her book, 'Daddy Long-Legs'. To attempt to describe the simplicity and beauty of 'Daddy Long-Legs' would be like attempting to describe the first breath of Spring after an exceedingly tiresome and hard Winter."

Enjoyed a two-years' run in New York and was then toured for over three years. Royalty, \$25.00. Price, 75 cents.

## To the Ladies

A hilarious comedy in 3 acts, by George S. Kaufman and Marc Connelly. 11 males, 3 females. 3 interiors. Costumes, modern. Plays 2½ hours.

The authors of "Dulcy" have divulged a secret known to every woman—and to some men, though the men don't admit it.

The central figures are young Leonard Beebe and his wife Elsie, a little girl from Mobile. Leonard is the average young American clerk, the kind who read all the "Success" stories in the magazines and believe them. Elsie has determined to make him something more. She has her hands full—even has to make an after dinner speech for him—but she does it and the play shows how.

Helen Hayes played Elsie and Otto Kruger impersonated Leonard in New York, where it ran a whole season. Here's a clean and wholesome play, deliciously funny and altogether a diverting evening's entertainment. Royalty, \$25.00. Price, 75 cents.

## Three Live Ghosts

Comedy in 3 acts by Frederick Isham and Max Marcin. 6 males, 4 females (2 policemen). 1 interior throughout. Costumes, modern. Plays 2½ hours.

"Three Live Ghosts" is brim full of fun and humor and is sure to keep audiences in gales of laughter. The New York critics described it as the most ingenious and amusing comedy of the season, genuinely funny. It played a full season in New York, then toured the big cities. A lovely comedy of merit. Royalty, \$25.00. Price, 75 cents.

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